

# ial

## Issues in Applied Linguistics

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Volume 6 Number 1 • June 1995

### SPECIAL ISSUE

#### SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE MINORITIES

#### MAIN ARTICLES

**Categorical Gender Myths in Native America:  
Gender Deictics in Lakhota**  
Sara Trechter

**Who Has the Right Answer? Differential Cultural Emphasis  
in Question/Answer Structures and the Case of Hmong  
Students at a Northern California High School**  
Michael Shaw Findlay

**Equal Educational Opportunity for Language Minority  
Students: From Policy to Practice at Oyster Bilingual School**  
Rebecca D. Freeman

#### INTERVIEWS

**On Chicano Languages and Chicano Life:  
Otto Santa Ana A.**  
by Patricia Baquedano-López

**On African American English:  
Marcyliena Morgan**  
by Betsy Rymes



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## CONTENTS

### Editorial:

Applied Linguistics and Language Minorities  
Betsy Rymes and Susan Strauss

1

## MAIN ARTICLES

Categorical Gender Myths in Native America:  
Gender Deictics in Lakhota  
Sara Trechter

5

Who Has the Right Answer? Differential Cultural Emphasis  
in Question/Answer Structures and the Case of Hmong  
Students at a Northern California High School  
Michael Shaw Findlay

23

Equal Educational Opportunity  
for Language Minority Students:  
From Policy to Practice at Oyster Bilingual School  
Rebecca D. Freeman

39

## INTERVIEWS

On Chicano Languages and Chicano Life:  
An Interview with Otto Santa Ana A.  
Patricia Baquedano-López

65

African American English:  
An Interview with Marcyliena Morgan  
Betsy Rymes

85

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*

Rod Ellis

Reviewed by Scarlett L. Robbins

99

### *How Languages are Learned*

Patsy Lightbown and Nina Spada

Reviewed by Zoë J. Argyres

104

### *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*

Colin Baker

Reviewed by Patricia Baquedano-López

108

### *Culture and Language Learning in Higher Education*

Michael Byram (Editor)

Reviewed by Kylie Hsu

112

### *The Rainmaker's Dog*

Cynthia Dresser

Reviewed by Tanya Stivers

117

## Publications Received

119

## Subscription Information

121

## Back Issue Information

122

## Information for Contributors

125





## Editorial

### Applied Linguistics and Language Minorities

#### I

The United States is more interesting than it sometimes lets itself admit. One does not have to go to India or New Guinea for diversity of language.

Dell Hymes

How does one 'apply' linguistics? More specifically, how does one apply linguistics to 'language minorities?' As the articles and interviews in this issue demonstrate, applying linguistics to language minorities involves examining not only the structure of the language being used, but also the ways that language is put to use within a particular speech community. Thus, while this issue includes discussion of Hmong, Lakota, Spanish, Chicano English, and African American English speakers, the authors go beyond examining these languages and dialects as systems detached from the community in which they are used; each researcher analyzes the necessarily situated use of language. In this way, these scholars 'apply linguistics' to a particular communicative situation in order to understand more implicit linguistic subtleties or underlying social patterns.

The analysis of situated language frequently reveals that generalizations of theoretical linguistics fail to do justice to language as it is used in authentic interaction. As Sara Trechter's article on Lakota gendered clitics makes clear, looking at both the structure of Lakota as well as its particular communicative setting can greatly expand an understanding of the Lakota language. In this way, Trechter's work goes beyond the stereotypical assumptions about the use of gendered forms in Native American languages. By applying linguistic analysis to recordings of speech from a variety of settings, this article presents non-typical speech examples which display the inherent creativity behind the use of forms previously considered to be "categorically" gendered.

The variety of ways in which languages are used adds a new level of meaning to the phrase "language diversity." As Michael Findlay's article on Hmong students in monolingual classrooms demonstrates, even if everyone in a classroom is speaking English, there is a difference in the *kinds* of English being spoken. While Hmong students may understand the words the teacher is speaking, they frequently do not share the cultural assumptions behind those words, and as a result, Hmong students may fail to achieve their academic

potential. In contrast, the school discussed in Rebecca Freeman's article struggles to provide "equal educational opportunity" through a bilingual English/Spanish program. As applied linguistic analysis demonstrates, however, education at this school is not always as 'equal' as the ideals of its practitioners suggest. While the staff and faculty work hard to create equal opportunities in Spanish and English, the framing of questions in the classroom occasionally reveals that English, even in these classrooms is the language of "privilege." In this study, while teachers clearly teach students to use both English and Spanish, the way these languages are spoken provides clues into underlying societal biases.

African American English and Chicano English, as discussed by Marcyliena Morgan and Otto Santa Ana, further exemplify Hymes' definition of languages not as systems isolated from their social origins, but as "ways of speaking" (1981). Both of these scholars emphasize the need to see 'non-standard' forms of English in their full complexity, and this perspective necessarily leads them to conduct research which explores not only the structure, but also the historical and social origins of Chicano and African American English varieties. Morgan's discussion of African American "counterlanguage" further demonstrates how the use of a language variety can simultaneously display membership in a particular community as well as contest the speech and assumptions of the dominant discourse. Santa Ana's discussion of "language attitudes" similarly addresses the inherent political choices involved in speaking a particular variety.

All of these articles and interviews combine to form a collective call for scholars and language teachers to take stock of their own assumptions about language and to further explore its complexities. The book reviews in this issue echo this call: Reviews by Scarlett Robbins and Zoë Argyres discuss books which encourage language teachers and scholars to look into the research on second language acquisition which debunks common myths about language learning. Patricia Baquedano-López, Kylie Hsu, and Tanya Stivers all review books which address issues of culture in the language classroom.

Even this short volume supports Hymes' observation that "one does not have to go to India or New Guinea for diversity of language." The United States, however, has not only a diversity of languages, but a plethora of controversy surrounding their use. Currently, bilingual education and affirmative action have both fallen into disfavor and proposition 187, passed this year in California, has become an emblem of current anti-immigration sentiment. These 'developments' could portend a decrease in our country's language diversity, but as the work in this volume suggests, language variety will always persist in some form. Applied linguistic study of language minorities combines an understanding of the complexity of language with an exploration of the diversity of life around us in order to, in Morgan's words "show, demonstrate, reveal to the world what's going on within a particular group, society, culture." One hopes that from such revelations, a deeper appreciation of both human and linguistic variety can emerge.

## II

Between thought and expression lies a lifetime.

Lou Reed

This issue of *ial* marks the end of our co-editorship, as Susan will be spending the coming year in Japan. As co-editors we have worked to bring both of our own interests to bear on the work included in the journal while continuing to maintain *ial* as a forum for new issues. We have also extended the mission of *ial* by actively encouraging cross-disciplinary contributions and publishing thematic issues unified by current areas of interest rather than academic discipline. While Susan is leaving to pursue her linguistic interests this year in Japan, East Asian linguistics has found a prominent position here in *ial*: Our previous special issue: "Applied Linguistics from an East Asian Perspective," has received tremendous response: Upon publication, requests arrived nearly daily from around the world.

The current special issue continues our efforts to attract a diversity of readers, as well as contributors. While officially titled "Sociolinguistics and Language Minorities," this issue includes articles and book reviews from the fields of Anthropology, English, and Education, as well as TESL and Applied Linguistics. *Ial* continues to be a respected journal of Applied Linguistics and now other fields are beginning to become substantially involved as well.

In the coming year, Betsy will continue as editor of *ial*, publishing another thematic issue, "Discourse-based Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition" in December. Creating a publication for Applied Linguistics which confronts issues and encourages cross-disciplinary involvement will continue to be a challenge and, as the epigraph suggests, an experiment in expression which will evolve throughout the entire lifetime of the journal.

June 1995

Betsy Rymes and Susan Strauss

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# Categorical Gender Myths in Native America: Gender Deictics in Lakhota

Sara Trechter

California State University, Chico

*This paper questions the existence of distinctions which are solely based on the gender of the speaker or hearer in Native American languages. An analysis of conversations from field work conducted in Pine Ridge, South Dakota and the texts of Ella Deloria reveals that the gender deictics of Lakhota indicate more than the "sex" of the speaker. Certain deictics have prototypical associations such as nurturance for clitics typically used by women or authority for those used by men. However, both male and female speakers sometimes use the deictics which are considered appropriate to the other sex. Given that both sexes sometimes use the same gender deictics and that the deictics accomplish more than indicating the gender of the speaker, the existence of "categorical gender" is dubious. I propose an analysis following Hanks (1993) which recognizes both the validity of native speaker metapragmatic judgments of "appropriately" gendered speech and contextual deviation. By recognizing a distinction between schematic prototypes or frames versus their implementation in context (framework) for Lakhota, the debate concerning the presence of true categorical gender distinctions in Native American languages such as Koasati, Atsina, and Yana can be resolved. A simple description of categorical gender for these languages is improbable.*

## INTRODUCTION

Native American languages such as Koasati (Muskogean family), Atsina (Algonquian), and Yana (Hokan) have long been cited in the linguistic literature and introductory language textbooks as possessing categorical gender distinctions, where there is isomorphism between a form in the linguistic system and the gender of the speaker or hearer (Bodine, 1975; Bonvillain, 1993; Flannery, 1946; Haas, 1944; Sapir, 1949). The aim of this paper is to reinterpret the myth of categorical gender in various Native American languages as it is espoused in many linguistic sources. By establishing the difference between schematic prototypes (frames) of the gendered clitics of Lakhota versus their implementation in specific contexts

(frameworks) and through an examination of the gender anomalies which occur in several languages which were previously thought to display categorical gender, I show that it is unlikely that 'sex exclusive' gender systems as previously defined operate in any language.

I focus on the system of gender clitics in the Siouan language, Lakhota, primarily because sufficient information about the gendered speech system in Lakhota can still be obtained. Of all the Native American languages which have traditionally been cited as having categorical gender, Lakhota is one of the few that has a significant number of speakers (over 15,000) and is therefore still viable (Kinkade, 1991). Although linguists have noted gender anomalies in Koasati (less than 200 speakers), Yana (no speakers) and Atsina (less than 10 speakers), they have only done so in passing. A more thorough examination of these is impossible for several reasons:

a. In obsolescing languages, the use of phonological, lexical, and grammatical indicators of distinct social categories is often lost through acculturation in a society that no longer retains social autonomy.

b. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which dialect variation plays a role as researchers question the validity of gendered speech accounts of the past. Because claims for the existence of gendered forms vary a great deal from dialect to dialect, this may cause misinterpretation in languages for which there is little dialect information from an earlier period.<sup>1</sup>

c. Speakers who have acquired dying languages may have done so under restricted circumstances, e.g., male speakers may have only learned the language from females, such as grandmothers, who primarily used the female forms.

d. With so few speakers, it is difficult to ascertain if gender usage is related to conversational context and status of participants, when there are so few contexts in which native speakers of the language converse.

e. Through the examination of the historical records of the language little can be determined, for much of the elicited speech was in the form of folktales or historical narrative in which the speech of the participants in these events was often idealized according to stereotypic norms.

However, the historical records of Lakhota are unusually thorough because the native speaker and linguist Ella Deloria had the foresight to record conversations in which she took part in the 1930s and 1950s, giving minute descriptions of participant relationships and overall context.

## **Lakhota Typical Gender**

The speech of males and females in Lakhota generally varies in several respects: in pitch, degree of nasality, choice of interjections and in the use of sentence-final clitics. These optional post-verbal clitics express the illocutionary force of the utterance and differ according to the sociological gender of the speaker, gender being the association of the sexual categories

of male and female with expected sociocultural patterns of behavior. Linguists such as Buechel (1939), Boas and Deloria (1941) and Rood and Taylor (to appear) have all noted that certain clitics in Lakhota apparently change in relation to the sex of the speaker (see Table 1 below).<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1. Lakhota Clitics**

Illocutionary/ Affective force	Male	Female
formal question	hųwo	hųwe (obsolete)
command	yo	ye
familiar command	yet <sup>h</sup> o	nit <sup>h</sup> o
opinion/emphasis	yelo	yele, ye
emphatic statement	kft	kfto
entreaty	ye	na
surprise/opinion	yewa	yema

In addition to the illocutionary force of the utterance, these clitics quite often serve to express the affective force or the speaker's emotional state. Hence, the choice to use a specific clitic has the effect of locating the attitude/force/gender/state of mind of the speaker in relation to the utterance, creating a social or discourse deictic effect (Fillmore, 1975; Levinson, 1983; Anderson & Keenan, 1985). These prototypical connotations of affective state for the clitics are best represented by examples from folktales in which the speaker attributes stereotypically gendered speech to the character in the narrative to clearly illustrate his/her role in the plot.

For instance, *yele*, which is conventionally associated with the speech of a woman also carries a sort of maternal or nurturance quality in its prototypical usage when a woman is speaking to children or someone she cares for as in examples (1) and (2) below. In example (1), the woman is portrayed as overly-concerned for her husband's welfare. She is sweet-talking him deceptively by using low-tones and *yele* to express her exaggerated womanly position of concern, and in (2) a grandmother is expressing her concern and relief at finding her twin grandsons safe after a *ṛ<sup>h</sup>ipi* fire.

- wanítuk<sup>h</sup>a  
you:weary

**yele.**  
**female:assertion.**

'How tired you must be,' (Deloria, 1937)

2.      Hinú,      ʊfika      mic<sup>h</sup>ʔkʃi      tohɪni  
          Well,      poor      my:son      always
- oʃótamakit'apila      tk<sup>h</sup>a  
 smoke:by means of:die:pl:diminutive      almost

**yelé:!**

**female:assertion**

'Well, did my poor little sons almost choke to death from the smoke,' (Deloria, 1932)

In contrast, the clitic *yelo*, conventionally associated with a male statement or opinion, implies a certain degree of masculine authority, especially when used by an elder male delivering a final opinion. Example (3) illustrates this as an eighty-year-old male concludes a long description of what it is to be a Lakhota 'Indian' or *waficu* 'white,' implying his unquestionable authority to decide these matters. In (4), the same man is indicating by the rising-falling tone and elongation of the vowel that something is just occurring to him and by *yelo* that he considers it to be fact. In fact, he establishes authority on this matter by using *yelo*.

3.      Ho                      hená yake kɪ,      hená é      **yelo**.  
          sentence starter      those sit      the,      this      is      **male:assertion**

Ho                      c<sup>h</sup>aʃ      lé      táku      ilúkca.  
 sentence    starter      so      this      whatever    you:think.

'My listeners, this is the way it is; this is the truth no matter what you think.'

4.      úgna      t<sup>h</sup>óka hé.      hel                      maxpiya ó  
          Maybe first      that.      that (Red)      Cloud's      in

ówic<sup>h</sup>aya      etə...      Ohə      héhé                      u  
 generation      from....      Yes      male:interjection      comes

**welô...**

**male:assertion...**

'Maybe that's where it first came from—Red Cloud's generation. Yes, that's where it came from.'



People can flout these implied meanings especially in a joking context or relationship. By using *yele* in example (5), the woman exploits maternal concern to show irony as she supposedly doubts Vine Deloria Sr.'s ability to deliver a decent speech in Washington, D.C. She is in a joking, in-law relationship with Deloria Sr.; he is older than she, and for these reasons an interpretation of real maternal concern and nurturance would be improbable. A similar effect is achieved in (6) as the woman insults herself, but makes it a joke by using the emphatic female form *kíto*. This is akin to the English 'I'm disgusting.'

5.      *fiké,*            *ehāni*            *efaf*            *wāzī*            *owáwa nā*            *yuha*  
          poor:one      earlier            why:not      one            I:write    and            have

*yewák<sup>h</sup>iyela<sup>f</sup>ni. tók<sup>h</sup>efk<sup>e</sup> yuhélhel*  
 I:sent:him:not    how            bewildered

*nažiktele!*  
 stand:potential:**female assertion!**

'Poor thing, why didn't I write a speech to take along. How pitifully he will grope about for something to say' (Deloria, 1956).

6.      *c<sup>h</sup>a*      *lé*            *hokfí-ųzektepi*      *eyápi*            *kí*  
          So      this      child-anus:killed    say:pl            the

*hémac<sup>h</sup>a      kíto!*  
 I:that:kind    **female:emphasis!**

'I am the sort that is called rectum-killed!' (Deloria, ca. 1937)

Note that in several of these cases, stress, tone, and elongation of the vowel in the clitic play an important role in contributing to the affective effect intended by the speaker. In fact, according to Deloria (1974) in her *Dakota Texts*,

The particle 'ye' at the close of a request signifies a petition, but even without it, the tone of the voice in which a request is spoken is the determining factor (p. 122: note 3).

The basic meaning of several of the clitics may be modified or intensified depending on the tone and stress with which they are uttered. For instance, a speaker who strongly stresses *yelo* may indicate that this particular clitic no longer is a statement, but carries the force of an

imperative. Consequently, the use of the clitics can be highly individualized depending upon the speaker's personality or emotional state.

In conclusion, there do seem to be restrictions on the possible kinds of affective states expressed by speakers as they adhere to the rule of 'men use *yelo*; women use *yele*.' Of course, not all people in every situation adhere to these restrictions, and not all males have the authority in the society to consistently utter authoritative opinions. A drunk or derelict might be laughed at if he spoke in this way. But, would the same happen to an authoritative woman? I take up this question in the next section.

### **Lakhota Atypically Gendered Speech**

There are clear exceptions to the strict sexual division of male-female clitic use. These anomalies can best be explained by the social position of the speaker in relation to the speech event, the relative age of the addressee, or the supposed sexual preference of the speaker--the same factors which appear to govern the regular usage of the clitics. During the remainder of this discussion, I will focus on the clitics *yelo*, *ye*, *k/fo*, *yele*, and the absence of clitics to illustrate the influence of linguistic and social contexts on clitic usage.

#### **Situation 1: Relative age of addressee**

If the addressee is much younger than the speaker, or is a child, or if the speaker wants to assert that the addressee and he share an emotional tie of a child and parent, a male may possibly use female clitics. In example (7), a man sees his two-year-old nephew who he was not expecting at his house that evening and he calls to the child:

- |    |                            |         |                   |
|----|----------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| 7. | Wąlewą                     | hiyu    | wele:.            |
|    | male:interjection:surprise | he:came | female:assertion. |

'Look who's come!'

The use of the female clitic in this sentence does two things: A) With the elongated falling intonation on *le*, the speaker is indicating that something has occurred to him that is new; B) By imitating what a woman might say (women being perceived as experienced in the ways they speak to small children), the speaker is indicating a closeness to the boy.

Consequently, the male use of 'female' speech is an acknowledgement of an affective relationship between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker implements 'female' speech to show this relationship in the context rather than asserting, 'I am a female speaking.' A possible analysis in this instance is that the speaker is deictically projecting the sphere of 'female'

speech in the same way he would when quoting a female speaker, so that the male speaker in example (7) is actually articulating what a female speaker might be supposed to say in order to represent himself and his relationship with the addressee as close or even semi-maternal.<sup>3</sup> Thus, deictic projection or shift of the deictic center from that of the speaker's place, time, social status, or gender to that of an implied other, effectively creates a new point of view for the speaker without forcing him to claim the female affective qualities as part of his central gender voice.

Yet a shift in the point of view or pure deictic projection is not always a satisfactory explanation of male use of female clitics as we shall see in the situations below, where context and content of utterance influence clitic use.

**Situation 2: Social position of speaker in relation to the speech event:  
Context of utterance**

The following utterance occurred as an 80-year-old man was extolling the virtues of past generations in order to coerce the younger addressee to live up to his present expectations. (Speaker B is not the addressee.)

8. A: Honá hé tʰəfi A--- wəyeya kʰili  
sentence starter that male:cousin A--- holy really

**kʰto.**  
**female:emphatic**

- B: lí:la upʰikpʰiya wóglake  
very nicely he:spoke

- A: Lí:la wəʔʊspe. Lí:la lakʰota  
Very educated. Very Lakhota

wawókiya hecʰa.  
to:take:up:for:someone that:kind.

- A: 'That male cousin A--- was a really good/holy man.

- B: He spoke very nicely.

- A: He was very educated. He was very Lakhota (in that) he was the kind to take up for someone.'

The male speaker here uses the emphatic female *kʰto* describing the great ability of a man who is now dead. This is indeed an emphatic usage, but it is unclear why this speaker used *kʰto* instead of *kʰt*, the male emphatic. There are several possible explanations. First of all, this may be the form *ʊʰto*, described in Boas and Deloria (1941), which is used in talking about

the past or how things used to be, and which they believe to be related to *k/fo*. Yet according to one native speaker, the old man uses *k/fo* because the person he is speaking of is dead and can no longer defend himself. Defense of the stated character of the dead person in the face of any possible criticism is a possible explanation for making the statement essentially even more emphatic by voicing the final vowel, despite the fact that this is the 'woman's' clitic. The additional emphasis makes this man's character untouchable. The emphasis may also be reflective of the speaker's affective state, as he was angry when embarking upon his exhortation to the younger speaker, and finally, he may just have been attempting to get the younger male's full attention to emphasize the importance of what he was saying.

Of course, the use of an emphatic clitic or even a normal male opinion clitic depends to a certain extent on the addressee or the audience, those people who are not directly being addressed, but might be listening. For example, a fifty-year-old man avoided any use of male *yelo* conclusion opinion particles at all, ending most of his statements in *pi* 'plural' even when he was clearly giving opinions of things that personally affected him. His father was surreptitiously listening the entire time he spoke so he most likely did not commit himself in deference to his father or fear of being overtly challenged.

A similar illustration is of a man in his sixties speaking to a nephew in his forties, and stating his opinion about a very important matter which had for over an hour been the topic of conversation: Christian versus Native religion. After the speaker had compared the religions of those around him, talked about a specific medicine bundle and its history, and approached the question of proper religion in several ways, he concludes:

9.       Ho,   héc<sup>h</sup>iya   təhə   i:       tok<sup>h</sup>if       mif<sup>h</sup>eya   lé  
           there   from (pause)   carelessly   me:too   this
- imáyalųye       kí...  
 you:asked:me   the
- Hel       i:       lak<sup>h</sup>ota   woc<sup>h</sup>ekiye   unazįkta  
 There   (pause)   lakhota   prayer   dual:stand:potential
- kec<sup>h</sup>ami?   eyał   hec<sup>h</sup>ųpi   s'e.   i:...  
 I:think   but:then   do:plural   like. (pause)

'There (all that information referring to preceding monologue) from just a careless question. In my understanding, you and I should stand with Lakhota prayer/ritual or do something like they did.'

When finally giving his concluding opinion after speaking from personal knowledge, he doesn't use a typical male (*yelo*) clitic, but ends with a glottal stop. His opinion is not authoritative but purely personal, (*kec<sup>h</sup>ami* 'I think'). There are two possible reasons for this: A) It reveals the personality of this quiet, reserved speaker who can go for days without saying anything; B) It reflects the present audience, a rather dominant woman who might disagree with him. His assertions are therefore never authoritative through the use of clitics, but rather the opposite as the examples in (10) show:

- 10 a. hec<sup>h</sup>upi s'e eya awábleze.  
do:plural like (filler) **I:understand.**

'In the same way they did, I understand.'

- b.     kɪ      hé      é     nac<sup>h</sup>éce  
         the    this    is    probably

'Probably this is theirs.'

- c. kaʔúʃiiʔc'iya      ʊpi      yapi  
humble:reflexive:causative      be:plural      go:plural

**sece**

dubitative:statement

'They humbled themselves to go there maybe.'

If the speaker wishes to assert something, it is done with a verb such as *awábleze* 'I understand' or *kec<sup>h</sup>ami* 'I think.'

In addition to the two factors already mentioned, personality and audience, it must be noted that the speakers, a married couple, have not completely forgotten the existence of the tape-recorder as they comment that they cannot begin a verbal fight because it will be recorded. This aspect of the speech event likely affects the extent to which this male speaker wants to commit to the factual content of his assertions as he speaks about a personal and individual subject: religion.

### Situation 3: Sexual preference of speaker

In the anomolous situations above, men use women's clitics or no clitics at all based upon the speech event. The question arises, in what kinds of contexts might women use male clitics, or are there no examples of this because men have more freedom to break the norms of clitic use? Both

female and male speakers regularly quote the speech of others, assuming the voice and perspective of the original speaker, but the gendered clitics in these instances serve to attribute the originality of the content to another author, rather than to establish the animator's gender.

11.      oyate    nilak<sup>h</sup>otapikta                      hécina    taku    eyápi kte  
           people   you:lakhota:pl:potential   if            what    say:pl:potential
- kɪ        hená ec<sup>h</sup>ál                      ec<sup>h</sup>anɔpi  
           the        these in:like:way   do:plural
- yelo**                                      eya                                      keye  
**male:assertion**                      he:said                                      that:say

'If you want to be lakhota people, these things they say, you will do, he said, that is said.'

Here the clitic *yelo* derives its meaning from a stereotypic attribution of gender, expressing the illocutionary force of a statement. The holy man who originally asserted his authority (in this case, about the proper procedure for ritually killing a dog) might not have used a gendered clitic or may have used a clitic which did not imply authority. But, this description of the holy man's frustration at the improper ceremonial procedures of the modern day is embedded in a group of anecdotes of a female speaker, whose point concerning the irresponsibility of the younger generations is reinforced by the attribution of an authoritative proclamation to the medicine man. She can do this without expressing her own authoritative speech or assuming the gender qualities of a male speaker.

However, some women do use male speech in their primary voice, and this implies a certain masculinity, just as an over-use of *ye* by men would show effeminacy. When hearing a brother's assertion that "men say *yo*, and women say *ye*," a female in her forties immediately asserted, "Yeah, well I say *yo* and *yelo*, but I'm not gay. It's just all of these brothers." Another female speaker who used the male clitics regularly was considered by some to be gay, referred to as a 'tomboy' by one speaker, and as a 'dyke' or 'that woman with balls' by another. These two women shared several qualities beyond their speech. They both grew up with a number of brothers and few or no sisters, and they both were in positions of public authority: one was a judge, the other a police officer.

The contrast in usage of the 'female' and 'male' clitics at first glance fits into a pattern of authority (public and male) gender versus that of maternity (private and female). It appears that the male clitics do stress the authority of a person to speak about certain topics, and such authority may be indicative of the masculine gender. This works well with Ochs' claim

that phonological or morphological indicators of gender are constitutive in that "linguistic features may index social meanings, stances, social acts, social activities, which in turn helps to constitute gender meanings" (1991, p. 341). For instance, according to Ochs, the use of the particle *ze* (male) in Japanese coarsely intensifies an utterance, whereas *wa* (female) gently intensifies it. The speakers' associations of a certain affective quality with a specific gender leads them to use these particles or clitics differently.

Although this line of thinking may be explanatory of the authoritative female and male use of *yo* and *yelo* and the male's use of *yele*, it does not adequately account for the males use of the very emphatic *k/to*. And, the dichotomy of authority/maternity as endemic of separate gender categories is too stereotypical for Lakhota as it also implies that the female gendered clitics carry no authority. This is simply not the case as example (12) illustrates. In this situation, a woman is uncertain about the propriety of her singing in public with a man during the year she is mourning. Her older sister-in-law gives her permission (*ye*), states an opinion (*ye*), orders her to sing (*ye*) and then gives her final opinion (*ye*) about the matter which invites no further discussion:

12.      lową **ye**.                                      Ho      niwafte  
             sing   **female:permission**.              Voice   you:good
- ye...**                                      ehąni  
**opinion/fact**      for a long time
- kic'i      waʔú      yúk'ą      kic'i      walówa.  
             w/her      I:was      and      w/her      I:sang.
- Miye eyaf walówa      owúkihiŋni.      Wana  
             me      but      I:sing      I:able:negative.      Now
- loté      kɪ mafice      k'ų.                      C'ha      lową      **yé!**  
             throat      the I:bad      past:article.      So      sing      **command**
- Ho      kɪ      wą                                      wafte      luha      **ye:**  
             voice      the complementizer      good      you:have      **fact/opinion**

'Sing! You have a good voice. For a long time, we've been associated, and sung together, but I'm not able to sing. Now my throat is bad, so sing! You have a good voice.'

The authority in this particular example is of a private nature (an older sister's authority over a younger one) and one may therefore be tempted to divide the authority of men and women into that of two different spheres:

public versus private authority, which is why women in positions of public authority such as the police officer and the judge would be tempted to use male speech. Yet according to Medicine (1987), women have long held the ability to speak in the same spheres as men, and according to Powers (1986) it is the very quality of their maternity (ability to remain unmoved by public opinion, just as when dealing with children) which permits them to succeed in areas such as judgeships. In (12) too, the private authority of an older sister has public repercussions, and in a society in which extended family relationships are still important, and women are in professional positions, the distinction between what is public or private becomes blurred. Consequently, this division is problematic, though there are areas such as child rearing and socialization where women apparently have more influence.

The exceptions to the rules of gendered clitics may reveal speakers' expected social roles for males and females in a stereotypic schema of the society. However, it is clearly difficult to generalize the meaning of these affective and social connotations as the use of the clitics is dependent upon the age of the speaker and addressee, their kinship relation, knowledge of the language, social stance, and the perception of a third party (audience) in addition to the content of the utterance and affective disposition of the speaker in the speech event. Frustrating as it may seem, an operative scheme of gender deixis in Lakshota would necessarily require projection of gender as a socially deictic category, and therefore the particles which index gender must be interpreted in the overall ground of the speech event, which one can see is constantly created and changing according to the factors listed above and the interactive influence that constitutive gender exerts over the speech event.

### **A Social Frame/Framework Analysis**

The difference between linguist and native speaker accounts of the gender system in Lakshota and its implementation in a variety of contexts is not necessarily inconsistent nor insolvable. Nor does it require the complete dismissal of the notion of categorical gender, only its modification. A principled distinction must be made, however, between the speakers' metapragmatic analysis of their gendered speech system, and the implementation of that system. In other words, claims of sex exclusive or categorical gender may be accurate in terms of prototypical categories of usage; but, in actual speech events, speakers manipulate context and their role within that context by choosing which gendered clitics to display and whether to display them at all.

By adapting the notions of frame and framework from Hanks' (1993) work on spatial deixis to a social deixis perspective, we can reexamine the pragmatics of the gender system in Lakshota. In Hanks' work, a *frame*



"denote[s] a set of lexical items whose members correspond to different parts of a conceptual whole," and a *framework* is "the immediate social field of space and time perception, orientation, and participant engagement in acts of reference" (pp. 127-128). A *frame* therefore contains structural aspects of meaning, which are conventional and fairly fixed, but a *framework* deals with a specific instance of use in language. The *framework* is a variable local production in space and time and therefore contains the participants' orientation with respect to the social setting.

The account of the gender clitic system in Table 1 is a schematic frame or an idealized model of the gender clitic system in Lakshota; it represents the prototypical association of meaning and use of the clitics without actually considering real speakers and situations. For example, to understand the meaning of *ye* and *yo* (imperatives) versus *yele* and *yelo* (statements), one must understand that they work within a *frame* of gender and illocutionary force, in distinction from each other and from the other illocutionary force markers of Table 1. In addition, in each individual situation, these forms create a particular *framework*, that is, the meaning derived from the use of these clitics in specific contexts, stereotypic or otherwise, as they indicate affective state, nurturance, or authority of speaker respective to the utterance and speech event.

It is possible that speakers of the language also have a notion of prototypical frameworks, those exemplary cultural representations which give rise to the connotations of nurturance for women's speech or authority for men's. It is obvious that the speakers are aware of these to some extent because they manipulate them in prototypical (examples 3-7) as well as non-prototypical contexts. For instance, women speaking to a young child or a husband are often given as 'good' examples of women's speech. Thus, the male who assumed 'female' speech to speak to the young child in example (7) primarily assumed the prototypical meanings of nurturance and affection associated with female speech in an immediate framework.

Likewise, the female speaker who used the 'male' clitics knew that in a schematic interpretation, her speech would make her a 'man' or a lesbian, but this is clearly not what she intended by the use of this speech, as she immediately claimed she was not gay. Thus, the speakers show an awareness of the gender clitic system on at least two different levels: a schematic representation or frame (men say *yo*; women say *ye*) and on the level of stereotypic gender associations. Either or both of these may be mapped into a local framework of usage, and an addressee's interpretative emphasis on one or the other may lead to miscommunication.

## Gender Deixis in Other Native American Languages

In other Native American languages where the determination of gendered speech has been debated as an indicator of sex versus that of

power/status of the speaker in the society (or something as yet indescribable), it is probable that this confusion is due not only to the constitutive nature of gender markers in these societies which pragmatically implicate maleness or femaleness, but also to personality and contextual influence. Haas (1944) has shown that Oklahoma Koasati speakers systematically differed in the pronunciation of word-final consonants depending on their sexual categorization as males or females; Flannery (1946) discovered a similar pronunciation distinction in Atsina, a dialect of Arapaho spoken in Fort Belknap, Montana. Sapir (1949), in the first quarter of the twentieth century, noted systematic morphological and pronunciation differences when men speak to men in Yana society.

13. 'Exclusive' speech examples

Koasati (Kimball, 1987)

<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	
alóhlq	alólo:f	he can drive
ákpq	ákpó:f	do not eat
ocíntq	ocínto:f	you can come

Atsina/Gros Ventre (Flannery, 1946)

<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	
k / ky	c	
ikénibik	icénibic	his gum

Yana (Sapir, 1949)

<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	
ya	yana	person
nisat <sup>h</sup>	nisat <sup>h</sup> i	it is said he goes
p <sup>h</sup> at <sup>h</sup>	p <sup>h</sup> adi	place

Although 'exotic' Native American languages are reported over and over as possessing sex exclusive systems, there is considerable doubt that this has ever been the case, and it is more than likely that categorically distinct systems based on the sex of the speaker or hearer do not exist in many of these languages. Even Haas (1944) in her article 'Men's and Women's speech in Koasati' observed that Koasati men and women take on the voice of the other sex when quoting and in the appropriate context in telling folktales, and Flannery (1946) reported that when men use women's speech in Atsina that they are regarded as effeminate.

Given this meager information, one might be tempted to regard the idea of 'sex' exclusive linguistic features as dubious. And subsequently, Kimball (1987, 1990) in a reexamination of Koasati claims there are examples of women in the early part of this century using the male terminal *-ʃ* marker (what Haas described as a pronunciation difference) as a possible indication of status or respect rather than gender. One of these women was a famous Native American doctor, and the other the daughter and wife of a chief. In recent field research in Atsina, Taylor (1982) has discovered that at least some males use female pronunciation features when they are speaking to children or foreigners, e.g., linguists, using what they perceived to be an 'easier' style of pronunciation in order to communicate. Taylor speculates that because Atsina children are traditionally cared for primarily by women, they would first learn the female pronunciation through caretaker language and subsequently some male children would adopt male pronunciation, given enough exposure and overt socialization. Finally, there is doubt about the function of male to male speech in Yana as Luthin (1991) has found instances in past records of males using 'male to male' speech when speaking to women on formal occasions.

From this scant amount of information, it is difficult to conclude anything specific about the nature of the gender deictic systems in each of these languages, except that there are discrepancies between the accounts of linguists who worked with consultants and those who have revisited these sources. There is a likelihood that the discrepancies between the original and subsequent investigations in each of these languages are due in part to the initial tendency to describe only the frame of the gender deictic systems in these languages.

## CONCLUSION

The data presented above for Lakhota are not 'typical.' A Lakhota speaker would likely say that it is so contextual as to be a partial misrepresentation, for it does not represent an abstract system. In fact, a fluent speaker and teacher of Lakhota upon reading the statement 'men say *yele* and women say *yelo*' out of context naturally responded 'Only if his grandmother raised him.' In his opinion, most men if they had had the proper exposure to male speakers when growing up would not regularly use the female gendered forms. Yet a gay speaker might, and in quotation people do.

When native speakers make these sorts of judgments about their languages, or are engaged in elicitation tasks with linguists, gender of the speaker or hearer may be viewed as a categorical distinction, for they are presenting frames and prototypical frameworks of usage. However, as they

use language in a variety of interactive contexts or frameworks, they create subtle nuances, which are not always to them the most salient features of their interaction, but which nevertheless are important to meaning. I would argue that this is true for any language, so that to restrict a description of a gendered speech system to an idealization, though interesting, misses the highly important facet of 'doing gender' or viewing it as something created and reinforced through interaction itself (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Both native speaker intuition, local productions and the relationship between the two are important to a sociolinguistic understanding of gender. Regrettably, because of the obsolescence of languages such as Koasati and Atsina, and the death of Yana, we can no longer investigate this relationship in these languages fully, but perhaps this is no excuse for promulgating the simplistic myth of 'categorical' gender for these languages or any others.

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The debate about the gender deictics in Koasati may partially be due to the differences in dialect between groups of Koasati speakers (see Haas, 1944; Kimball, 1990; Saville-Troike, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> The Lakhota examples are primarily transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet. A notable exception to this is the use of a nasal hook to indicate nasalized vowels, e.g., /ã, ĩ, ʊ̃/.

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed discussion of deictic projection, see Lyons (1977).

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# **Who Has the Right Answer? Differential Cultural Emphasis in Question/Answer Structures and the Case of Hmong Students at a Northern California High School**

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*Observed speech and interactive behavior of American Hmong students who were attending a northern California high school indicate that Hmong student responses to teacher generated questions were often influenced by culturally based predispositions. In answering certain types of content related questions, these students relied on underlying cultural emphases (pervasive culture specific themes) which were sometimes different from those generally held by Anglo American students and teachers at this school. Because of these differences, Hmong students often provided answers considered "wrong" in academic contexts, although they were essentially correct from a normative Hmong perspective. Moreover, Laotian Hmong students, often described as "shy" by educators, were found to be carrying out normative cultural rules for demonstrating respect and deference to authority figures through silence. This "taciturn style" was evident during numerous open ended question/answer sessions as these exchanges occurred in classroom situations. Constructing answers on the basis of Hmong cultural agendas and remaining silent in classroom situations produced impediments to communication between these students and their teachers. Moreover, many teachers often did not recognize these problems as the result of fundamental cultural differences.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The arrival of Hmong students in American schools has presented a unique set of problems for educators. On the positive side, many teachers with whom I spoke described Hmong students as "highly motivated," "honest," "reliable," and "respectful." On the other hand, some teachers expressed concern over Hmong students and their apparent inability to engage teachers in open ended discourse. Many teachers attributed the general inability of Hmong students to engage others to a lack of fluency in English. Other teachers noted, however, that even students who had demonstrated a significant degree of fluency in English often attempted to

avoid "talking with teachers and other students during class time." Furthermore, some teachers noted that when working individually with Hmong students, answers provided by these students to teacher generated questions were often "dead wrong" despite the fact that in other situations these same students had demonstrated that they understood quite clearly a particular principle for solving a set of content related problems.

In assessing the speech behavior of language minority students, teachers and educational researchers often rely on traditional psychological models for guidance. In other disciplines, however, cognitive and affective dimensions of human speech behavior have been viewed as systemically linked to sociocultural factors and situational contexts (Holland & Quinn, 1989; Lave, 1988). Although anthropologists, linguists, and psychologists (especially social psychologists) are beginning to find some common ground in method and theory with regard to communicative/learning behavior, collaborative efforts are still seriously lacking. An example of this bias toward psychological explanations can be seen when, in describing the speech behavior of Hmong high school students (in a northern California high school), teachers, administrators, and school psychologists were prone to using the descriptive term "shy." Shyness, as the term is frequently used, implies the existence of a psychologically preconditioned personality structure which produces avoidance behavior in an individual. In addition, some educators characterized Hmong students, as well as other language minority students, as having learning disabilities because they often had difficulty answering what were assumed to be simple straight forward questions. In some cases learning problems were indeed psychological in nature and specific to an individual. The task for educators, therefore, becomes one of sorting out those behaviors which are psychologically based from those that are the product of shared cultural predispositioning. Some researchers have noted that some aspects of academic performance seem to differ between Anglo and Hmong as a result of differences in cultural/cognitive styles (c.f. Trueba, 1990, pp. 77-78). Ultimately, these recurring cultural patterns are expressed and perceived as overt personality traits at the psychological level. Moreover, further differences in specific communicative behavior may be complicated by shifts in social-situational contexts, making academic evaluation even more difficult.

Through an ethnographic study conducted during the 1991-1992 school year at a California high school, I have come to the conclusion that many of these patterns of Hmong student behavior, as observed for this study, are the result of cultural specific patterns of language socialization. Based on interviews conducted with Hmong consultants, through observing Hmong students throughout the course of a school year, and through a general approach utilized by linguistic anthropologists (ethnolinguistics), I have come to rely on two concepts to assist me in understanding certain aspects of culturally based Hmong student behavior: (a) "cultural emphasis"



(Hickerson, 1980) referring to the idea that cultural traditions, through their adaptations to specific natural, social, and mental environments will, through their language, reflect biases or emphases on descriptions and classifications of things, actions, and ideas; (b) "taciturn style," as a descriptive term for these student's predisposition for quietness in classroom contexts. My central aim in this article is to describe these underlying cultural differences and suggest a broad based model for assessing question and answer protocols that require educators to work across cultural linguistic boundaries.

## **THE HMONG**

The Hmong are an Asian People. Currently there are an estimated 4 to 5 million living in China (Schein, 1986, p.73), and an additional several hundred thousand migrant Hmong who have been living in Southeast Asia (primarily Laos) since the middle of the 18th century. As a result of the Indochina/Vietnam war and its aftermath (1975 on) most Laotian Hmong, along with other Laotian minority groups (e.g. Mien, Lowland Lao and Khmu), were forced to flee to Thailand for safety; the vast majority of these resettled in refugee camps set up by the government of Thailand along the southern banks of the Mekong river. Throughout the late 1970s and 1980s Hmong refugees immigrated in significant numbers to Australia, Canada, France, and the United States. According to the 1990 census there are approximately 100,000 Hmong currently living in the United States (U.S. Census, 1990); of that 100,000 more than half live in California; a trend which was established in the early 1980s (Olney, 1986, p. 182).

### **Language Socialization in Traditional Hmong Society**

Hmong parents typically do not fuss over or coddle their infants. In contrast to European and Euroamerican parents, who talk a great deal to their infants, Hmong parents avoid such talk (e.g. using baby talk or talking directly to babies). In fact, the Hmong express explicit taboos against talking too much to infants. One of my consultants put it this way: "To talk to babies is bad for them; maybe because there will be some trouble when spirits come to maybe hurt them, make them sick or something." These taboos and attitudes toward language and speech behavior in early life influence how communicative interaction is structured later in life. For example, in contrast to the way in which Anglo American parents use baby talk with their infants, Hmong infants never experience parent generated baby talk. They hear only adolescent/adult language, and most, if not all of this talk, is not directed toward infants. Thus, as Hmong infants grow,

physically and intellectually during their first five years of life, much of their energy is spent on acquiring what is essentially adult language.

Furthermore, Hmong infants are carried in cloth wraps on the backs of their mothers which allow infants to look outward over their mother's shoulders or under their arms. This provides an ongoing situation where children learn from an early age to be passive observers. Members of Hmong society from an early age participate in social gatherings, but are not initially included as direct participants. Active participation comes as a result of growing older and through acquiring status and position according to highly specific rules for integrating individuals into the whole of Hmong society. This form of socialization has the general affect of reinforcing a cultural value on observation over overt participation.

These emphases on acquisition of adult language and allowing Hmong infants to quietly observe social interaction without directly taking part are embedded in a larger underlying feature of Hmong culture: an emphasis on group identity over individual identity. Moreover, as I have said, as members of Hmong society grow older they must learn their place in Hmong society. To do this they must learn salient categories of social rank and status, how they are situated in the social system, and the sociolinguistic rules that govern how interactions are to be structured among members with differing statuses. In this sense, as Hmong children leave infancy and approach early adulthood (13 or 14 years of age), they must not only have acquired a significant degree of linguistic competence (comprehensive lexicon and syntactic structuring), but must have also acquired a complex set of social rules for regulating social communicative interaction across a number of social boundaries.

As a natural consequence of this process Hmong children learn values of cooperation, modesty, collective effort, and formal respect for those of higher social rank and status. In situations where resettlement outside of Southeast Asia has occurred, these traditional modes of behavior, at least initially, have been carried over (including school and classroom situations in North America). These recurring patterns of communicative interaction, as I have observed, are typical of Hmong students who have only recently arrived in the United States. The persistence of these patterns varies according to individual differences in language development, to the overall quality of exposure to English, and to the length of time spent in the United States. As these students adapt, emergent patterns of interaction and communication are added to these more traditional forms, and in some cases traditional modes of interaction are modified or abandoned altogether.

## EXPANDING ASSESSMENT MODELS

For many years educational policies and assessment protocols have been dominated by models for behavior which derived from psychology (Smith, 1988). While these explanatory models have been sufficient for isolating and analyzing a significant range of student behaviors they have, in some situations, been insufficient for assessing behavior that may be culturally based. Recent studies in such disciplines as linguistic anthropology (Salzmann, 1993, for an overview), sociolinguistics (Findlay, 1992, 1994; Heath, 1988; Philips, 1993), and intercultural communication (Samovar & Porter, 1991) have suggested that clear and comprehensive analysis of recurring speech and communicative behavior in general must take into account cultural rules for regulating social interaction and the selection of appropriate responses to questioning across a range of social situations: Hymes has called the ability to call on and use these rules "communicative competence" (1964).

For example, researchers working primarily in the field of "The Ethnography of Communication" have recognized "silence" as an important feature of culturally regulated communicative structures (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 39). Saville-Troike (1985) and Tannen (1981) have noted, through cross-cultural and cross-gender research, that silence is often employed in the language socialization process as a means of marking social boundaries. Wang (1977), whose ethnographic work was conducted in China, has pointed out that silence, or more specifically deference to authority figures expressed through silence, is an integral aspect of child rearing practices.

In contrast, psychological models tend to focus on the individual. Corsini's *Concise Encyclopedia of Psychology*, to illustrate, defines shyness as

being afraid of social interactions. Shyness is a complex condition that spans a wide continuum of behavior characteristics; it can range from occasional awkwardness in social situations to extreme neurosis and avoidance behavior that can completely disrupt an individual's life (1987, p. 1040).

Thus, describing individuals as shy places them in direct contrast to others whose behaviors might be described as unabashed. In a North American context, shy people, by virtue of their quiet behavior and their avoidance of social interaction, are seen as somewhat abnormal. Shyness in most instances is not seen by psychologists as a serious disorder, but in educational environments a shy person can experience extreme anxiety when asked to perform certain tasks (e.g. making speeches in front of classmates, answering questions in class, being called to the Principal's

office and so forth). Also, as Corsini's description indicates, in extreme cases more serious ramifications can arise. For the Hmong, however, quiet behavior is normal.

## CULTURAL EMPHASIS

Cultural emphasis is a concept which derives from linguistic anthropology as a response to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. It refers to the shared "logic of culture" (Hickerson, 1980, p. 111). Cultural emphasis can be empirically studied through the linguistic manifestations of cultural predispositions. These cultural patterns can be made explicit through the construction of culture specific mental/semantic domains (ethnolinguistic expression) and through social interaction patterns and the pragmatic use of language (sociolinguistic expression). In other words, as an individual member of a society acquires a language and a set of cultural rules for the organization of a particular world view, that individual will emphasize certain values, attitudes, and perceptions shared by most other members of that society. Hence, language reflects the general orientation of a group of people to the world in which they live. As a result of differential cultural emphases, individuals from differing cultural backgrounds may arrive at conclusions to common problems that differ significantly from those of others—or those asking the questions.

Susan Philips, in what is now considered a classic study, examined speech and interactive behavior of Native American children on the Warm Springs reservation in north eastern Oregon (1983). Her study suggests that people learn how to interact with others according to cultural rules that are specific to the society in which they are socialized. Moreover, the ways in which teachers structure their interactions with students are also culturally based, and Native American teachers were generally better able to organize classroom interactions to accommodate these students. Anglo American teachers had difficulty getting and holding the attention of their students. Thus, if two differing sets of interactive protocols were operating, communication with students, expectations of the teachers, and student performance could be affected negatively. These problems were most likely the result of differences in cultural emphasis. The ways in which social and communicative interactions are actually carried out across a range of social situations are what Philips calls "participant structures." Participant structures, as I use the term, are the sociolinguistic product of a range of patterned cultural agendas that regulate all communicative interactions.

For example, in one case I observed, four female Hmong students who were attending a sheltered math class were working through a set of verbal quantitative exercises. The goal of the lesson was to have students identify

quantities expressed in various ways as either "more than" or "less than" something else. At one point during the session the Hmong girls were asked the following question: "Which would you rather have? 2/3s of a dozen cookies? or 1/3 of a dozen cookies?" The Hmong girls responded consistently "1/3." The teacher repeated the question several times and with each response the girls indicated "1/3." Finally, out of desperation the teacher changed the way in which the question was framed: "Which is more?" All of the girls pointed to 2/3s of a dozen. There was an underlying traditional Hmong value at work here. The Hmong tend to emphasize cooperation in most social interactions. In fact, to the Hmong, cooperation, collective support, and mutual assistance take precedence over individuality (individuality is culturally emphasized by North Americans and Europeans). So, by selecting the smaller amount of cookies the girls were actually acting on the basis of a cultural emphasis on conservation and modesty where it is considered inappropriate or impolite to take a larger amount. When the teacher altered the question to "Which is more?" the girls recognized the question as a purely quantitative problem.

### **Taciturn Style**

As mentioned above, in Hmong society quietness and avoidance behavior among certain members with differing statuses and rank are the cultural norm. Hmong students are socialized in a way that dictates constant deference to authority; these forms of respect should be demonstrated through quiet, reserved behavior. These behavioral expressions are regulated through culturally sanctioned status differentials based on age, gender, and explicitly recognized rank (e.g., deference to village patriarchs, heads of extended households, kin groups, or clans). When Hmong children are not in the presence of authority figures, the context changes and they can, in general, be quite talkative.

In their treatment of these Hmong students teachers often used the same set of strategies employed with shy Anglo American students simply because Hmong students had been typed according to American perceptions of shyness. In the course of my research I found that Hmong students reacted privately to their treatment in ways that suggest that most are not actually shy, but are, in fact, carrying out behavior that is culturally learned. One student put it this way:

Why the teacher not talking [to] me all the time [ever]? Maybe they not knowing us [Hmong students]. I'm not knowing [I don't know]. Maybe just not making [picking] us.

Thus, what some educators are perceiving as shyness is, in reality, deference to the authority of the teacher.

## PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES

At the pedagogical level, and with regard to Hmong cultural values and taciturn style, three areas of concern emerge as relevant for teachers: (a) approaches to questioning (questioning strategies that work across cultural/linguistic boundaries), (b) performance and evaluation which are based on question/answer routines, and (c) use of Hmong cultural/linguistic brokers to mitigate problems of communication.

### Approaches to Questioning

In most teacher education programs, prospective teachers are exposed to a range of questioning strategies (Gall, 1970; Heath, 1988). These strategies usually call for questioning formats that presumably will stimulate student curiosity and motivation. For example, one of the most often used techniques involves directly asking for student volunteers instead of calling on students by name. Teachers might introduce a particular subject through a "set induction" (i.e., preconditioned context), then ask openly for volunteers to comment on the material. This approach also implies the existence of a North American cultural emphasis on competitiveness. This does not generally serve Hmong students well (or many other Southeast Asian students who share these same cultural values of collective effort). In order to elicit a response from these Hmong students teachers had to call on individuals by name. Traditionally, communicative exchanges between Hmong elders and other members of Hmong society are formal and rigid in nature. These implicit rules, which govern social interaction vertically, are carried out in order to maintain social order in prescribed cultural contexts. In Hmong households, younger members of the family can only talk to a Hmong elder (all males) if they have been specifically called on by name. For Hmong students this type of cultural rule is often transferred outside the Hmong community to school situations or any situation requiring respect for authority figures. This does not imply that teachers should give up questioning strategies that have proven useful to them, but suggests that they might include calling on students by name as an added stratagem.

### Performance and Evaluation

Evaluating the academic performance of these Hmong students with forms of evaluation that are culturally "loaded" resulted in inaccurate outcomes. Test results often did not reflect an accurate measure of competency and skill levels in that various forms of evaluation did not take

into account differing cultural emphases. To illustrate, in one particular instance several Hmong students who had been mainstreamed because of their fluency in English were asked to answer the following objective question (selected from a junior level history class):

Andrew Jackson made extensive use of his position as President. One of the most important sources of power for him was the use of:

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| a) veto power         | b) foreign investors |
| c) his fatherly image | d) the Navy          |

The correct answer is A (veto power). All of the Hmong students, with the exception of one student (who selected D), chose C as their answer. The teacher, after correcting the tests, noticed this pattern and wondered if culture was influencing the selection of their answer. Several days later I interviewed three of the Hmong students who had taken the test. I simply asked them why they had selected C ("his fatherly image") as their choice. One of the students responded:

I think he [is the] President. He [is] a leader right? the American people? I think it [is] important he be like [a] father to he [his] people. If too many people thinking he [is] not father, maybe they [will] not follow him.

My follow up question addressed the issue of veto power. Most of the students involved in the interview knew what veto power was and most knew that Jackson had used it to his advantage. However, the issue of "importance" belies a difference of cultural emphasis. To the Hmong students, Jackson's role as father to the nation superceded any other aspect of his Presidency. Thus, although these students were well aware of his use of veto power they selected answer C (his fatherly image) because it most closely represents their view of political authority.

The degree to which cultural emphasis is statistically significant on tests of this kind is difficult to ascertain. However, a general awareness of the existence of such problems can go a long way in providing culturally sensitive forms of evaluation. One suggestion would be to design questions that are as free of indirect or connotative language as possible. Avoid questions which require implicit understanding until students acquire a richer understanding of English idioms and implicature. In the cookies question, for example, "Which would you rather have?" only conveys "Which is more?" when the interlocutors share a particular cultural background (see Table 1).

Evaluating extended responses to more open ended questions also presented problems. In another instance the profound influence of normative

culture on the construction of responses to questions originating in a different cultural milieu was apparent. Hmong students, who were attending a regular English literature class, were shown a video of a recent production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The students, along with non-Hmong students were given a set of questions to take home. The questions or items requiring response had been designed to allow students a significant degree of latitude in their responses. The first item read: "Hamlet, throughout much of this story, appears to be upset or distressed. List some of the events in the story which might have caused Hamlet to be so disillusioned." In surveying the responses the next day the teacher and I found that all students who had turned in papers found that the murder of Hamlet's father had been the primary cause of his distress. On this point the Hmong students were in agreement with their peers. Anglo students also found that much of Hamlet's problem may have resulted from his mother marrying his uncle (who was probably the murderer). To the teacher's surprise, the Hmong students did not identify Hamlet's mother marrying his uncle (Hamlet's uncle) as a problem. In fact, in discussion with me, the teacher hypothesized, "They probably didn't quite understand the question or they just didn't know what was going on in that part of the story." This particular teacher attributed their not identifying this as a problem to a lack of comprehension of the question itself.

In a subsequent interview with several of these students (all of whom were partially fluent in English) I discovered why they did not see a problem with Hamlet's mother marrying his uncle. In Hmong society they practice the "levirate" rule for remarriage. The rule states that the brother of a deceased brother is obligated to marry the widow of the dead brother. Stated another way, a widow, if it is possible, is obligated to marry the brother of her deceased husband. Most likely this is done to keep that patrilineage segment and the extended household together. In Hmong terms, therefore, Hamlet's mother was acting in a manner consistent with Hmong rules for remarriage. One Hmong student put it this way:

If a woman[']s husband die. Then she marry the younger brother [of] her dead husband. It surprise me that Americans don't do this.

Moreover, in subsequent discussion in class several Anglo students expressed dismay at how quickly Hamlet's mother remarried. Although the Hmong students did not discuss this in class, in my interview with them, they, again, did not perceive a problem. In fact they all agreed that it is expected that upon the death of a husband that the wife is obligated to remarry as quickly as possible in order to maintain the integrity of the extended family. As the same student stated:



In class they say it weird that she [Hamlet's mother] get married. I guess that [is] the way they do it here. But, for the Hmong [the] woman—the wife—get married soon. Even if the brother already have wife, she [the widow] get married to him.

Evaluating performance on the basis of class participation could also be problematic. In classes where a significant portion of a grade is determined by class participation it might be useful to evaluate the various ways in which students are incorporated into classroom discussions. For Anglo students open and free discussion in classrooms was as much a part of their cultural experience as quietness and deference to authority was for these Hmong students. If grades are, to some extent, determined by class discussion, Hmong students might be explicitly invited to join in as discussion sessions unfold. Many of the teachers I observed used grouping strategies for purposes of facilitating cooperative learning and for generating student discussions. Hmong students observed for this study generally reacted positively to these grouping strategies. When students were not grouped and an open forum approach was employed, Hmong students tended to remain quiet and seemingly uninvolved or detached. This, in effect, amounted to a subtle form of exclusion.

### **Use of Cultural/Linguistic Brokers**

As previously mentioned, Hmong students who had only been in the United States for a short period of time were usually quiet in classroom situations. In addition, only a small number of these students spoke English (although the number of English fluent Hmong is ever growing). The coupling of these two factors, at times, made teacher-student communication extremely difficult. To compensate for these formidable barriers many of the monolingual teachers observed made extensive use of cultural/linguistic brokers. These brokers were bilingual Hmong students or aides who could not only interpret linguistic utterances, but could also identify possible problems stemming from differential cultural emphases. In transcending differences in cultural emphasis and the taciturn style of these Hmong students, brokers could speak effectively on behalf of Hmong students with limited proficiency in English. For example, in one particular ESL class students had been given the assignment of doing a public speech (in class). They were required to provide a five minute autobiographical description; a difficult task for these Hmong students because of a general lack of confidence in English and a shared deemphasis on individual achievement. The teacher called for volunteers. None of the Hmong students volunteered until a Hmong student aide raised her hand and said, "Vang is ready. He'll do it." At that point the teacher called on Vang and he gave his speech (with some difficulty in English).

Cultural/Linguistic brokers acted as communication experts who regulated messages being sent back and forth between teachers and Hmong students (Findlay, 1994). Most importantly, they were often able to break down barriers created by teachers misreading Hmong student behavior. Thus, for teachers to simply identify and use key brokers in their classrooms to facilitate communication with Hmong students, represented a significant step toward reducing numerous cultural/communicative barriers; barriers which, in many instances, were hindering the academic progress of these students.

## THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

To develop a workable understanding of how culture influences the situational construction of question/response exchanges, it is in my view useful to employ theoretical models that facilitate the analytical integration of specific speech acts with sociocultural predispositions toward social interaction. To do this I have conjoined two theoretical models that merge concerns over the linguistic construction and use of highly specific linguistic utterances ("speech acts") with underlying sociolinguistic and interactional dimensions of communicative transactions ("equivalence structures").

### Speech Act Theory and Equivalence Structures

To understand how differential cultural emphasis might have been influencing response outcomes in this situation, as mentioned above, I have relied on two theoretical frameworks: "Speech Act Theory" (Levinson, 1983; and Searle, 1969) and "equivalence structures" (Gearing, 1984; and Wallace, 1970). First, I have used Speech Act Theory to provide a conceptual framework for describing, in pragmatic terms, the structure of question/response utterances and to provide a means of identifying gaps in comprehension (of either spoken or written texts). Levinson and Searle have developed a set of concepts which allow for analysis of individual speech acts by drawing distinctions among the explicit meaning of an utterance (a "locutionary" act), the intent of a speaker (an "illocutionary" act), and the impact or reaction achieved by the utterance (a "perlocutionary" act). Any given utterance made by an individual carries these three dimensions and thus forms a complete speech act.

As I have used these concepts here, anyone attempting to decode a teacher's question is going to have to engage all aspects of the question as a speech act. For example, in the question "Which would you rather have, 2/3s of a dozen cookies? or 1/3 of a dozen?" the explicit utterance itself represents a locutionary act. Not hearing what is said or not knowing what

has been said (no lexical comprehension) would mean that communication has been impeded at this initial step in the overall process. When a hearer does hear what has been said and does know, at a literal level what has been said, but is not able to read the intent of the speaker, communication has broken down at the level of the illocutionary act (See Table 1). If this is the case, the perlocutionary act generated by the hearer(s) will not correspond to the locutionary and illocutionary acts that were produced by the initial speaker. When this occurs "equivalence" has *not* been achieved.

The basic idea of equivalence was first brought to light by Wallace (1970, pp. 27-36), and elaborated on by Gearing (1984) as a design to more effectively describe culture transmission process. Both Gearing and Wallace suggest that communication and learning occur not through direct reciprocal exchanges (the "conduit" model), but that meaning in communicative events always involves negotiated transactions. Meaning, therefore, is never discrete, uniform or entirely agreed upon. An agreement or "fit," of sorts, would be according to Wallace, a "partial equivalence." When Hmong students answer a question incorrectly or respond in a way that is not consistent with the intentions of the teacher (or whoever is asking a question), equivalence, as mentioned above, has not occurred. Table 1 demonstrates the systematics of this process.

When the teacher altered the math question, as indicated in Table 1, to "which is more" several equivalences resulted. First, the real intent (the illocutionary act) was made clear to the students. Second, the Hmong students, recognizing the question as a quantitative problem, did not opt for the Hmong value of taking less when offered two differing quantities of something (in this case cookies). With regard to the utterance "Who would like to give their speech" the intended meaning or illocutionary act can be found at the implicit level as "I want volunteers to give their speeches." The prevailing Hmong cultural predisposition toward not drawing attention to one's self through overt speech—what I have termed taciturn style—resulted in a nonequivalence response in the form of silence. For equivalence to emerge in any given communicative exchange, the parties involved must comprehend the intent behind the utterance of the person who is initiating an utterance that requires a response. At the level of the perlocutionary act, if equivalence is to be achieved, the hearer must not be impeded by normative cultural rules that are inconsistent with those of the person initiating an exchange.

**Table 1: The Impact of Differential Cultural Emphasis on Equivalence**

Speech Acts		Equivalence (fit?)
locution	illocution	perlocution
"Which would you rather have, 2/3s of a dozen or 1/3?"	Which is more?	'We want 1/3' NO
"Which is more?"	Identify quantity.	'2/3 is more' YES
"What is bothering Hamlet?"	His mother marrying his uncle is a universal cultural taboo.	Hamlet's mother is obligated to marry his uncle. NO
"Who would like to give their speech?"	I want volunteers to give their speeches.	Silence NO

## CONCLUSION

When assessing recurring student behaviors in various educational contexts, a range of explanatory models based on sociocultural factors should be included as an essential part of the process. To rely solely on psychological models forces educators into the difficult position of assessing student behavior without the benefit of data from cultural and linguistic sources. In this case a particular population of Hmong students utilized a different set of cultural values from their Anglo American counterparts in order to regulate communicative exchanges and to solve academic problems. Hmong students were also described as "shy" because their quiet behavior in classroom situations, at least superficially, resembled shyness. In order for educator's responses to the presence of these students in their schools to be more effective, a wider range of explanatory models are necessary for understanding the behavior of Hmong students. For this study I have relied on Speech Act Theory and equivalence structures to articulate how differences in cultural emphasis influence question-response outcomes. To assess academic performance and to understand more fully the classroom behavior of Hmong students—especially as these behaviors relate to verbal and written questioning—educators must be willing to acquire a full range of

relevant data and conceptual models (e.g., from psychology, ethnography [cultural anthropology], and sociolinguistics) to assist them. In this particular case detailed observation has suggested that cultural predispositions may be responsible for certain behavioral and informational outcomes. In any given situation educators must decide whether or not to include cultural criteria as part of their attempt to understand student behavior.

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# **Equal Educational Opportunity for Language Minority Students: From Policy to Practice at Oyster Bilingual School<sup>1</sup>**

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*Based on a two year ethnographic and discourse analytic study of Oyster Bilingual School in Washington, DC, this article illustrates what equal educational opportunity means for the linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse student population who participate in this "successful" two-way Spanish-English bilingual program. The article begins by summarizing the Oyster educators' perspective on equal educational opportunity, and emphasizes their opposition to the notion of equal educational opportunity implicit in mainstream U.S. programs and practices. The majority of the article then provides a comparative discourse analysis of the "same" kindergarten speech event in Spanish and English to illustrate how the Oyster educators translate their ideological assumptions and expectations into actual classroom practices. The micro-level classroom analysis demonstrates how the team-teachers work together to distribute and evaluate Spanish and English equally so that all students acquire a second language, develop academic skills in both languages, and use each other as resources in their learning. The analysis also reveals systematic discrepancies between ideal plan and actual implementation which are explained by consideration of Oyster's sociolinguistic context.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Bilingual Education Act mandates that United States public schools establish equal educational opportunity for children defined as Limited English Proficient (LEP) through bilingual and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and practices. But what does *equal educational opportunity* mean? As Ramirez, Yuen, and Ramey's (1991) longitudinal study emphasizes, there is so much contextual variation across bilingual and ESL programs that it is difficult to compare and evaluate how well particular kinds of programs prepare LEP students to participate and achieve in the academic mainstream. Researchers therefore need to look locally at particular schools to make their ideological notions of equal educational

opportunity explicit, and then analyze how those notions are realized in situated practice.

This paper illustrates what equal educational opportunity means for the linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse student population who attend the James F. Oyster Bilingual School, a two-way Spanish-English bilingual school in Washington, DC. According to Oyster's March 1993 Fact Sheet, the school is 58% Hispanic (primarily from El Salvador), 26% White, 12% Black, and 4% Asian, with the children representing over 25 countries; 74% of the student population is language minority; 24% are LEP; and 40% of Oyster's children are on the free and reduced lunch program available to low-income children in the D.C. Public Schools. In operation since 1971, Oyster's two-way bilingual program is considered successful by a variety of measures including students' standardized test scores and teachers' ongoing performance-based assessments. In addition, Oyster was cited for excellence by the Presidential National Advisory and Coordinating Council on Bilingual Education in 1986, and selected by *Hispanic* magazine and the Ryder Corporation to receive one of their Schools of Excellence Awards in 1993. Because Oyster is considered successful with its linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse student population, it offers an important perspective on how schools can organize themselves to provide equal educational opportunities to an increasingly diverse student population in the United States.

This article begins with a discussion of what equal educational opportunity for LEP, language minority, and language majority students means to the Oyster educators, and emphasizes their opposition to the notion of equal educational opportunity implicit in mainstream U.S. educational programs and practices. The majority of the paper then illustrates how the Oyster educators translate their ideological assumptions and expectations into actual classroom practices that enable the Oyster students to participate and achieve in school.

## **THE OYSTER PERSPECTIVE ON EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

My two year ethnographic/discourse analytic study of Oyster Bilingual School (Freeman, 1993) is based on the assumption that schools, like other institutions in society, are constituted primarily through discourse. That is, institutions are made up of people who talk and/or write about who they are and about what they say, do, believe, and value in patterned ways. It is important to emphasize that the abstract, underlying discourses within any institution are never neutral, but are always structured by ideologies. Actual spoken and written texts can be understood as instantiations of underlying



discourses, and they provide linguistic traces of the ideologies that structure those discourses (Fairclough, 1989, 1991; Freeman, 1993; Gee, 1991; Lemke, 1989, 1991). By collecting and analyzing actual spoken and written texts produced at Oyster Bilingual School, for example policy statements and other site documents as well as transcripts of open-ended interviews with policy makers, administrators, and teachers, I was able to piece together and make Oyster's abstract, underlying ideological notion of equal educational opportunity explicit. This section provides a summary of that notion.

The Oyster educators emphasize that their bilingual program provides an alternative to mainstream U.S. educational programs and practices which they argue are discriminatory for language minority students. Because the Bilingual Education Act targets Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, I begin my discussion by summarizing mainstream U.S. schools' treatment of this segment of the language minority student population. The language of education in mainstream U.S. schools is English. When students are identified as LEP, they are generally segregated from the mainstream program in either pull-out ESL classes or in transitional bilingual programs (Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991). In pull-out ESL classes, students receive ESL instruction; in transitional bilingual programs, students additionally receive content-area instruction in their native language. The purpose of these types of programs is for students to be provided the opportunity to acquire enough English to participate equally in the mainstream classes. Without entering into discussion of whether pull-out ESL classes and/or transitional bilingual programs enable LEP students to develop "full competence in English" as the Bilingual Education Act mandates (c.f. Adamson, 1993), it is clear that these programs implicitly equate equal educational opportunity with English language proficiency. The student's native language is thus viewed as a problem to be overcome. This "language-as-problem" orientation (Ruiz, 1984) locates the problem blocking LEP students' equal educational opportunities in the students themselves. The solution therefore requires these students to change to fit into the system.

The Oyster educators oppose such mainstream U.S. programs because they claim they have negative implications for LEP students. First, these educators oppose segregating LEP students in special programs. According to *The History and Politics of Oyster Bilingual Elementary School*, "the Director of EDC (Educational Development Center) pushed hard for integrated two-way bilingual education involving English and Spanish speakers. She felt that transitional bilingual education had isolated Hispanic students" (p. 2). The Oyster educators also oppose the low expectations for academic achievement that they argue characterize pull-out ESL and transitional bilingual programs. According to Señora Ortega<sup>2</sup> the principal during the first year of my study, "they (LEP students) were just sitting in

the ESL classrooms for a year and finally mainstreamed two years later with exit criteria that were for the birds. So the teachers say why should they sit there when they can be acquiring an education." Moreover, the Oyster educators reject what they describe as strong mainstream U.S. pressure towards monolingualism in English. According to Señor Estevez, one of the co-founders of Oyster's bilingual program, "they (LEP immigrants) have to find the identification of being an American in the dominance of a language and [the idea that] the sooner that I forget the old country the more American I am." What we see in these and in numerous other accounts is a general opposition to transitional bilingual and pull-out ESL programs which provide LEP students with little choice other than to assimilate to monolingualism in English.

The "language-as-resource" orientation (Ruiz, 1984) that characterizes Oyster's two-way Spanish-English bilingual program provides an alternative to the "language-as-problem" orientation of transitional bilingual and pull-out ESL programs described above. Instead of pressuring *LEP students* to become monolingual in English, the Oyster educators expect *all students* to become bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and English in integrated classes through the equal distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English languages and speakers. To accomplish this, there are two teachers in every class, one English-dominant who ideally speaks and is spoken to only in English and one Spanish-dominant who ideally speaks and is spoken to only in Spanish. These team-teachers are responsible for working together to ensure that approximately 50% of students' content-area instruction is in Spanish and 50% is in English so that students develop academic competence in both languages. At Oyster, Spanish is not a problem for native Spanish-speaking LEP students to overcome in order to participate equally in the mainstream classes. Because 50% of the content-area instruction is in Spanish, native Spanish-speaking LEP students can participate in the academic program from the beginning. And because Spanish-as-a-Second-Language (SSL) students need to develop academic competence in Spanish, Spanish-speakers' knowledge of Spanish provides them with symbolic capital that the SSL students need and (ideally) want. In this two-way bilingual program, Spanish is viewed as a resource to be developed by all students including those who speak Spanish, English, and/or any other languages. The classroom analysis in the next section provides an example of how this two-way Spanish-English program is implemented in practice.

However, the Oyster educators believe that there is more to equal educational opportunity than (English) language proficiency. As I describe in more detail below, implicit in mainstream U.S. educational programs and practices is an assumption of a relatively homogenous student body that interacts and interprets behavior according to white middle class (language majority) norms. Students who interact and interpret behavior differently are

expected to assimilate to language majority norms in order to participate and achieve in school. In other words, mainstream U.S. schools are characterized by a more general "difference-as-problem" orientation that parallels the "language-as-problem" orientation discussed above. The Oyster educators reject this orientation in favor of a "difference-as-resource" orientation because their student body is linguistically, culturally, and ethnically diverse. Their assumption of diversity in the study body has important implications for how the teachers organize their classroom practices.

Before proceeding to a discussion of Oyster's practices, it is important to make the abstract notion of "white middle class" or "language majority" norms explicit. The following synthesis of research in mainstream U.S. schools (Cazden, 1988; Chaudron, 1988; Cummins, 1989; Heath, 1983; Holmes, 1978; Kessler, 1992; Lemke, 1991; Mohan, 1989; Mohatt & Erickson, 1981; Nieto, 1992; Philips, 1983; Scarcella, 1992) is not intended to suggest that all mainstream U.S. classes are constituted by identical norms of interaction and interpretation. Rather, I present this brief theoretical discussion to provide a more concrete understanding of the underlying assumption of homogeneity that the Oyster educators oppose.

Mainstream U.S. classes are characterized by the transmission model of teaching and learning, which in a variety of ways reflects the assumption of a relatively homogeneous student population that has approximately the same background knowledge and that is able to integrate new information into that background knowledge in approximately the same way. Under this model, the teacher is defined as more powerful and more knowledgeable than the students. The teacher has the responsibility to transmit a standardized, Eurocentric curriculum content to the class; the students who make up the class have the responsibility to receive and learn the curriculum content, and then demonstrate mastery of that curriculum content primarily through standardized tests. One finds a narrow range of participation frameworks within mainstream U.S. classes, reflecting the assumption of a relatively homogenous student body that learns best in certain ways. The most common participation framework is the Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) triad. The teacher does the majority of the talking, and initiates students' responses primarily through the known-answer question. The classroom atmosphere is very individualistic, with students discouraged from talking to one another because such talk is viewed as disruptive and not part of the teaching and learning process. Rather, the students are encouraged to compete with each other for the teacher's attention and for the opportunity to respond to the known-answer question, thus demonstrating their mastery of the curriculum content in class. The students are then assessed through the teacher's oral evaluation of their contributions. It is also common for students to ask clarification questions of the teacher when they do not understand what is being presented in class. In

order for students to achieve in these classes, students must know what, when, and how to participate according to language majority norms.

The Oyster educators reject the assumption of a relatively homogeneous student population that must interact and interpret behavior according to language majority norms in order to participate and achieve in school. In contrast, their classroom practices reflect an assumption and expectation of linguistic and cultural diversity in the student population. For example, as opposed to a Eurocentric curriculum content, which reflects the heritage of white middle class (language majority) students, while excluding, marginalizing, and/or stereotyping the histories, contributions, and perspectives of language minority students (Nieto, 1992), the curriculum content at Oyster is multicultural. Multicultural at Oyster means that the histories, contributions, and perspectives of the (language minority) students who make up the majority of the school population (i.e., Latin American, African American, Caribbean, and African) are emphasized. And since standardized tests have been found to be biased against language minority populations (Mohan, 1992), the Oyster educators also rely on performance-based assessments that enable teachers and students to identify and document individual student's strengths.

Perhaps most importantly, Oyster's assumption and expectation of student diversity is reflected in the way the teachers organize the classroom interaction. At the broadest level, there are two major groups in the school; native Spanish-speakers and native English-speakers. The fact that half of the teachers are native Spanish-speakers contributes to these teachers' understanding of cultural differences, and to their abilities to meet the needs of their native Spanish-speaking students. For example, the sixth grade Spanish-dominant teacher once told me, "the Latino students don't know how to ask." His assumption that Latino students will ask questions of their peers but not of their teacher is a partial explanation for his use of small group cooperative learning organizations in which students are encouraged to ask questions of and learn from their peers (Freeman, 1993, pp. 219-224).

While generalizations such as this are useful starting points, there is so much variation within the native Spanish-speaking group at Oyster, and even more variation when the native English-speaking population is also considered, that generalizations about cultural differences can actually be limiting. Teachers therefore need to find ways to include students who have a wide range of interactional styles and learning preferences. Two years observing and analyzing classroom interaction throughout Oyster made it obvious that the Oyster educators employ a variety of participation frameworks in order to accommodate their students' diversity. Small, student-centered cooperative learning groups were most common. Such groups provide students greater opportunities to talk, negotiate meaning, and jointly solve problems in their first and second languages than traditional teacher-fronted classroom organizations allow. In addition, because students

are regularly organized into linguistically and culturally diverse groupings, the students (ideally) develop improved intercultural communication skills and increased tolerance of and respect for diversity (c.f. Kessler, 1992).

Not only do the Oyster students' interactional styles and learning preferences vary, but they also have a wide range of background knowledge. As the third grade English-dominant teacher described, "never assume that all the children know anything...their backgrounds are too varied." Therefore, teachers need to find ways to continually assess individual student's background knowledge, strengths and needs, and develop strategies to help students build on what they know. As the kindergarten Spanish-dominant teacher explained, "you have to know every family and you have to know every background of every child." While it is probably impossible for teachers to know all of this information about every child they teach, it is possible for teachers to look into why particular students are not participating and achieving in class in the way the teacher would want. And then it is possible for the teacher to find ways to bring the marginalized students into the classroom interaction, for example, by trying different kinds of assignments, or different kinds of participation frameworks, or different strategies to encourage students to demonstrate whatever strengths they have. The classroom analysis in the next section illustrates some of the strategies that the kindergarten teachers at Oyster use to include students that they believe may become marginalized in school.

While linguistic, racial, and ethnic differences are generally described as resources to be developed, socioeconomic class difference is repeatedly described as a problem that teachers face in meeting the students' diverse educational needs. According to the kindergarten Spanish-dominant teacher, "it's more class than anything else but here Hispanic is poor and black and white is rich." This notion of low-income-as-problem was echoed by other teachers. For example, in a meeting in which kindergarten and first grade teachers were discussing criteria for student promotion, one of the first grade English-dominant teachers expressed her concern for the low-income students as follows, "social and emotional stuff is a problem for me. We don't have a middle class here. We have rich and poor." The classroom analysis that follows demonstrates the Kindergarten teachers' coordinated efforts to include several of the low-income Salvadoran students in the classroom activities, which reflects the more general concern with this population throughout the school.

In sum, Oyster's perspective on equal educational opportunity can be understood as in opposition to the mainstream U.S. notion of equal educational opportunity in a variety of important and interrelated ways. As opposed to the mainstream U.S. assumption and expectation that LEP students be segregated from the mainstream program until they have (ideally) acquired enough English to participate and achieve in the all-English content-area classes, the Oyster educators expect all students to

become bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and English in integrated classes through the equal representation and evaluation of Spanish and English languages and speakers. And as opposed to the mainstream U.S. expectation that language minority students assimilate to language majority norms of interaction and interpretation in order to participate and achieve equally in school, the Oyster educators assume that their students come from radically different backgrounds, so they expect students to have different interactional styles, preferences, strengths, and needs. These assumptions and expectations require the Oyster educators to organize their curriculum content, classroom interaction, and assessment practices to accommodate that diversity so that all students can meet the Oyster educators' high expectations equally. The mainstream U.S. notion of equal educational opportunity places the burden of responsibility on the *LEP and language minority students* to change so that the school can treat all students equally according to language majority norms. In contrast, the Oyster notion of equal educational opportunity places the burden of responsibility on the *educational program and practices* to work in a variety of ways with their diverse student population so that all students can meet equally high expectations.

## EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN SITUATED PRACTICE

This section demonstrates how the Oyster educators translate their notion of equal educational opportunity into actual classroom practices through a comparative discourse analysis of the "same" Kindergarten speech situation in Spanish and English. My analysis illustrates how students are to develop communicative competence, including academic competence, in their first and second languages through the equal distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English languages and speakers, and reveals systematic discrepancies between ideal plan and actual implementation. It also illustrates how the teachers work with students' diverse backgrounds in a variety of ways so that they can meet the equally high expectations that the Oyster educators hold for all students.

My investigation of classroom discourse follows an ethnography of communication approach (Duranti, 1988; Hymes, 1974; Saville-Troike, 1982), beginning with the macro-level notion of speech community. Because the Oyster educators explicitly refer to themselves as one "community," I consider Oyster Bilingual School to be the relevant speech community for analysis (Freeman, 1993, pp. 110-113). However, consistent with work in Critical Discourse Analysis (e.g., Fairclough, 1989, 1991), I assume that the Oyster educational discourse needs to be situated in relation to mainstream U.S. educational and societal discourse. Therefore, as the

discussion in the last section demonstrated, my analysis of discourse within Oyster Bilingual School is continually informed by an understanding of mainstream U.S. programs and practices.

The next level of analysis in an ethnography of communication study is the speech situation, which Hymes (1974) argues is in some recognizable way bounded or integral to the participants. The speech situations that are relevant to this study are the individual classes or segments of classes that teachers and students explicitly name (e.g., "Storywriting" and "Opening"). I proceed from identification of the speech situation to analysis of the speech event or speech activity (I use these terms interchangeably). My analysis of speech events, which is informed by ongoing conversations with students and teachers about what they do and why, provides a means of making the underlying norms of interaction and interpretation that guide behavior within the Oyster speech community explicit (c.f. Hymes, 1974).

I spent the first year of my study in the sixth grade class and the second year in one of the Kindergarten classes observing and analyzing classroom interaction. To increase the validity of the analyses, I also observed a variety of other classes on different grade levels. Because the Oyster teachers have a great deal of autonomy in how they allocate content-area instruction in Spanish and English, there is considerable variation from class to class. However, Oyster's policy, that students receive instruction in Language Arts in Spanish and English every day and approximately 50% of the rest of their content-area instruction in Spanish and English per week, is generally followed throughout the school. In some cases, the Spanish-dominant teacher teaches a subject one week in Spanish and the English-dominant teacher teaches that same subject the next week in English. In other cases, the teachers switch subjects/languages by the month or by the semester. Some teams work very closely together, with very structured coordination of content across languages, while others work much more independently. For example, as one teacher explained to me, there is not as much need for closely coordinated instruction in the upper grades because by the time students have completed kindergarten, they are expected to have acquired sufficient Spanish and/or English to learn content through their second language and to have learned what is expected of them in school. Regardless of the surface variation, all of the teachers organize their classes so that native Spanish-speaking students and native English-speaking students work together in many different ways to acquire Spanish and English through content, develop academic skills in both languages, and come to see each other as resources in their learning. The following excerpts from Kindergarten "Opening" in English on Friday, March 8, 1991 and in Spanish on Friday March 15, 1991 clearly illustrate patterns that I observed throughout the school.<sup>3</sup>

## Equal Distribution and Evaluation of English and Spanish: Ideal and Actual

This section illustrates how the kindergarten team-teachers work together to distribute and evaluate Spanish and English equally so that students acquire their second language, develop academic skills in both languages, and use each other as resources in their learning. Based on my observations and supported by the teachers' interpretations, the speech situation "Opening" is the most formal language and skills lesson in kindergarten, and provides students the most structured opportunity to understand what it means to be in school. Otherwise kindergarten focuses on social skills and language acquisition in a more playful, less structured format. Opening is the second speech situation of the day, occurring immediately after Storywriting. Opening lasts approximately 20-30 minutes, and tends to get longer as the year progresses with the teachers integrating more skills into the Opening format. To fulfill the goal of equal distribution and evaluation of English and Spanish languages and speakers, the language used in Opening alternates weekly. One week the English-dominant teacher, Mrs. Davis, leads Opening in English and the next week the Spanish-dominant teacher, Señora Rodriguez, leads Opening in Spanish. I refer to the teacher who leads Opening as the "official" teacher, and I refer to the teacher who generally observes and/or circulates to help certain students as the "unofficial" teacher. When the Spanish-dominant teacher is the official teacher, I refer to Spanish as the "official" language, and when the English-dominant teacher is the official teacher, I refer to English as the "official" language. The classroom analysis presented in this section, which focuses on language use patterns and distribution of skills in the Spanish and English Openings, reveals systematic discrepancies between ideal plan and actual implementation which can be explained by the interaction of the Oyster educational discourse and mainstream U.S. discourse.

There is considerable similarity between Opening in English and in Spanish on these two consecutive Fridays, reflecting the close coordination of the team-teachers in this kindergarten class. For example, the same six speech activities constitute both Openings, and they occur in the same order. These speech activities can be distinguished from one another primarily by their different goals. Reflecting those different goals, I named the speech activities as follows: 1) *Opening song*, 2) *Today is*, 3) *Framework*, 4) *Counting girls*, 5) *Counting boys*, and 6) *Total*. English Opening ends with an additional speech event, 7) *Reading the story*, which does not appear in Spanish Opening. While the speech events consist of the same basic elements in the same order, there are some important differences. I begin my discussion of these similarities and differences with a comparison of the language used in each Opening. This analysis begins to reveal that although Spanish and English are ideally distributed and evaluated equally throughout



Oyster Bilingual School, English is actually attributed more prestige. Consideration of Oyster's sociolinguistic context, however, makes this discrepancy not only understandable but expected.

Both English and Spanish Openings begin with a song, which signals to the children that it is time to stop writing their stories and to prepare for Opening. This use of songs is prevalent in Kindergarten in Spanish and English throughout the day. Songs are very involving for the children, and seem to aid their acquisition of native-like accent and fluency in the second language. In addition, because the children enjoy singing, the regular use of songs seems to enhance even the few reluctant students' willingness to participate in learning the second language, and to learn content through that language.

*Opening song* is the only speech activity that is longer in the Spanish Opening than in the English Opening. This difference in length can be explained by the fact that Spanish Opening is regularly initiated by two songs, the first in English and the second in Spanish, while English Opening is initiated by only one song in English. The language choice pattern in the Spanish and English *Opening song* activity reflects a more general pattern that I observed throughout the school. That is, although the ideal at Oyster is for Spanish and English to be distributed and evaluated equally, Oyster does not exist in a sociolinguistic vacuum. English is the language of wider communication in Washington, DC. as in mainstream U.S. society. All of the children, including the LEP students, are assumed to have at least some exposure to English. Many of the native English-speakers, in contrast, have no base in Spanish whatsoever, and may have had no contact with the Spanish language or Spanish speakers before their experience at Oyster. English is therefore always used in the *Opening song* to signal the beginning of Opening to the children in a way they can all more or less understand. When Señora Rodriguez follows with a Spanish song, which the students all immediately join, Opening that day is to be in Spanish. The language choice is never stated explicitly to the children, but is indicated through the song and the teacher who sings it.

Analysis of codeswitching behavior in this kindergarten class and throughout the school provides further evidence of leakage from mainstream U.S. discourse (in which English is the language of wider communication and therefore attributed more prestige than Spanish) into the Oyster educational discourse (in which Spanish and English are to be distributed and evaluated equally). Not surprisingly, the kindergarten teachers' codeswitching practices show evidence of the influence of mainstream discourse at Oyster. Consistent with the ideal plan that the English-dominant teacher speak and be spoken to only in English and the Spanish-dominant teacher speak and be spoken to only in Spanish, there are very few examples of codeswitching to the unofficial language in either Spanish or English Opening. Because the English-dominant teacher does not speak

Spanish, there are no examples of codeswitching by the official teacher to the unofficial language in English Opening. The fact that this English-dominant teacher, like several others at Oyster, does not speak Spanish, but that all of the Spanish-dominant teachers speak English, is an example of the unequal distribution and evaluation of the two languages. That is, while bilingualism is clearly an asset for the English-dominant teachers at Oyster, it was not a necessity in 1993. When I mentioned this discrepancy to the principal in 1994, she said that all new hires were required to be bilingual.

There are, however, two examples of the official teacher switching to the unofficial language in Spanish Opening. In both cases, Señora Rodriguez's utterance in English, *excuse me*, was the same, and functioned to discipline the children (one instance of this codeswitching behavior appears in the following section). Señora Rodriguez's switch to English to discipline the students could be unwittingly signaling to the students that English is the more serious language. This interpretation gains support from studies of speech communities around the world in which a speaker switches to the "high" language in order to impress a child with the seriousness of a command (c.f. Fasold, 1984).

Observation of the students talking informally among themselves, for example at lunch or at recess or during Storywriting time in kindergarten, also suggests that the students attribute more prestige to English than Spanish, despite the ideal that these languages be distributed and evaluated equally throughout the school. While some students do choose to speak Spanish among themselves outside of the official classroom interaction, it is much more common to hear English than Spanish in these situations, especially among the older students. Given Oyster's sociolinguistic context, with students regularly exposed to English outside of school in the music that they listen to and on the television programs that they watch, such language choice is not surprising. When I pointed this observation out to Señora Rodriguez, and asked whether she thought the native Spanish-speakers would maintain their Spanish, she responded, "I think they'll recapture their Spanish...they'll realize exactly where they fit...but society begins to teach them that there is a difference and there is a discrepancy." However, although the ideal of equal distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English is not achieved throughout the school, it does seem that the status of the Spanish language and Spanish speakers is raised considerably. All of the students, regardless of linguistic background, can and do speak Spanish, and interviews with the students suggest that they value this skill and want to continue to develop and use their Spanish in the future.

In addition to revealing discrepancies between ideal plan and actual implementation, analysis of codeswitching behavior illustrates a way that the students attempt to negotiate meaning with each other through the two languages. For example, at the end of the *Total* activity in Spanish, an

English-dominant student switches from Spanish to English apparently to request confirmation of his comprehension from a Spanish-dominant student<sup>4</sup>:

- 192 T and Ss: doce..trece..catorce..quince (counting students together)  
 193 diez y seis..diez y siete..diez y ocho..diez y nueve  
 194 veinte..vientiuno  
 195 Rodriguez: hay veintiuno (there are twenty one)  
 196 S: **me me** (raising hand and calling out)  
 197 Rodriguez: que pasa a ti (what's the matter with you)  
 198 Ss: (unintelligible)  
 199 S: **is it twenty one?** (to another student)  
 200 S: **yeah twenty one**

This brief example illustrates how knowledge of Spanish functions as symbolic capital in the two-way bilingual model. The students who are proficient in Spanish are positioned by the Limited Spanish Proficient (LSP) students, as well as the teachers, as resources in the LSP students' learning. The students' switch to the unofficial language is not problematic in this Kindergarten class or in other classes that I observed throughout the school. The primary goal of Oyster Bilingual School, like any public school, is comprehension of content and academic skills development. However the students accomplish these goals is acceptable.

Codeswitching is not the only practice through which I observed discrepancies between ideal plan and actual implementation. There are also discrepancies in the skills required in the English and Spanish content areas in this Kindergarten class and throughout the school. For example, immediately following the opening song, the official teacher begins to write on the board in exactly the same format every day. Below is a representation of what the English-dominant teacher writes when Opening is in English and of what the Spanish-dominant teacher writes when Opening is in Spanish. I have provided the English translation of the Spanish in parentheses—this information is not provided to the students on the board.

English	Spanish
Today is _____	Hoy es _____ (today is)
We have _____ girls	las niñas _____ (the girls)
We have _____ boys	los niños _____ (the boys)
We have _____ students	los estudiantes _____ (the students)

The written format is almost identical in English and Spanish, and provides the organizational framework for the remainder of the Opening activities. Consistency in content across languages here and throughout the Opening activities assists the students in developing academic skills through their first and second languages, and helps them acquire their second language through content. Notice, however, that in the English activity, the format includes full sentences on each line. In the Spanish activity, only the first line is a complete sentence; the other lines include only nouns and articles. We see here a first example of skills discrepancies between English and Spanish with more skills required in English.

There is a very smooth transition between the *Opening song* and *Today is* activities in English and in Spanish, and the pattern is identical across languages. In each case, as the teacher writes the first sentence on the board, the teacher and students read aloud in unison using very formulaic intonation: in English, *toda:y?...i:s?...* , and in Spanish, *ho:y?...e:s?...* . In both cases, the vowels are lengthened (marked with a colon), each of the words ends in rising intonation (marked with a question mark), and the pause between words is (approximately) the same length (marked with three periods). A similar pattern can be found later in the English and Spanish *Framework* activities. In both of those activities, when the teacher and students read the lines about the girls and about the boys, they use rising intonation; when they read the lines about the students, they use falling intonation. These intonation patterns provide unity within and across Opening activities in both languages. In addition, it seems that this formulaicity helps students memorize these chunks in the second language, which seems to facilitate their development of academic skills using these chunks as the content-base.

After the teacher and students read the first sentence of the *Today is* activity out loud, the teacher encourages the students to jointly negotiate the name of the day, the date, the month, and the year. In this activity, however, as in the written framework discussed above, there are more skills required when Opening is in English than when it is in Spanish. For example, as the beginning of the *Today is* activity below in English illustrates, students are also expected to provide spelling information:

- |    |          |  |
|----|----------|--|
| 20 | Ss:      | Today:y?... i:s?... (In rehearsed unison)      |
| 21 | Davis:   | If you tell me                                 |
| 22 |          | If you tell me the day                         |
| 23 |          | You have to tell me what letter it starts with |
| 24 | S1:      | F  |
| 25 | S2:      | Friday   |
| 26 | Davis:   | Juanito?                                       |
| 27 | Juanito: | [F (quietly)]                                  |
| 28 | Ss:      | [F   |

- 29 Ss: [Friday  
 30 Davis: Juanito says it's Friday with aa:n? (Rising  
 31 intonation-elongated to signal for them to finish)  
 32 Ss and T: F

In this example, in response to the teacher's request for spelling information, students begin to provide the name of the day and the letter it begins with (I provide a discussion of the teacher/student interaction in the next section). Later in the *Today is* activity in English, the teacher also requests punctuation information.

As we see below, however, the Spanish *Today is* activity requires neither spelling nor punctuation information. Note also that although the Spanish *Today is* activity begins in the same way as the English *Today is* activity, the transition from the formulaic *ho:y? e:s?* to the students' providing the name of the day is marked by a song:

- 29 Ss: ho:y?...e:s? (toda:y?...i:s?  
 30 domingo lunes? (in song: Sunday Monday?)  
 31 Rodriguez: no..espérate (no..wait)

(Señora Rodriguez interrupted the activity to make a comment about a student to Mrs. Davis. When she resumes the activity in line 41, the students' rhythm is off a bit.)

- 41 Rodriguez: Ho:y?..  
 42 Ss: e:s?  
 43 Rodriguez: e:s?  
 44 S: domingo lunes? (in song: Sunday Monday?)  
 45 Rodriguez: domingo (Sunday)  
 46 T and Ss: mingo lunes? martes y miercoles (Sun.  
 Mon.? Tues. and Wed.)  
 47 jueves y viernes y sabado? (Thurs. and Fri. and  
 Sat.?)  
 48 son los días (they are the days)  
 49 de la semana (of the week)  
 50 vamos a ver (let's see)  
 51 qué día es hoy (what day is today: end of  
 song)  
 52 Rodriguez: Qué día es hoy? (what day is today)  
 53 Silvia  
 54 Silvia: viernes (Friday)

In the English *Today is* activity, students are expected to know the days of the week on their own, and to provide that information in response to the

teacher's request for that information. In contrast, in the Spanish *Today* is activity, the use of the Spanish song reinforces the names of all of the days. In this way, if the students don't know exactly what day it is in Spanish, they can simply pick the name of the day out of the song.

Analysis of each of the other Opening activities in English and Spanish reveals similar patterns; very close coordination of basic skills across languages, and more skills required in each of the English activities. While other classes may not be coordinated as closely as these kindergarten Opening activities, one can observe more skills required of students in English than in Spanish throughout the school. Oyster's assessment practices reflect the same pattern. For example, because Oyster is a DC. public school, it is required to administer standardized tests, and these tests are only administered in English. Furthermore, if a student fails a class in Spanish, he/she can be promoted to the next grade; if a student fails a class in English, he/she must repeat that class. The teachers are aware of these discrepancies in the distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English throughout the school. As one teacher told me, they are working in a variety of ways to "make Spanish count as much" at Oyster (c.f. Freeman, 1994).

### **Providing Equal Educational Opportunity to Students from Unequal Backgrounds.**

As discussed in the beginning of the paper, equal educational opportunity at Oyster means more than the equal distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English. Perhaps more importantly, equal educational opportunity means recognizing the very unequal backgrounds that students bring with them to school, which requires the teachers to work differently with their students so that all students can meet the equally high expectations that the teachers have for them. This section illustrates how the kindergarten English-dominant and Spanish-dominant teachers work together to include the students that they are the most concerned about in the kindergarten speech event "Opening" in English and Spanish. The team-teachers' marked behavior with the same low-income native Spanish-speaking Salvadoran students provides specific examples of the Oyster educators' more general concern for how to provide equal educational opportunities to this segment of their student population.

I begin my discussion with Silvia, a student who had been very quiet and seemingly uninvolved in this and other activities throughout the year. In the following excerpt from the English Opening, the unofficial teacher, Señora Rodriguez, nonverbally requests that the official teacher, Mrs. Davis, call on Silvia to answer a question. Because she is standing at the back of the class, the students cannot see Señora Rodriguez's gesture:

- 78 (Rodriguez motions for Davis to ask Silvia from behind the class)  
 79 Davis: And...  
 80 Silvia  
 81 Can you tell me what..  
 82 year it is?  
 83 S1: nineteen...  
 84 S2: nineteen ninety one  
 85 Davis: (whispers) Silvia...  
 86 Silvia (motions for her to come to Davis)  
 87 (Silvia whispers to Mrs. Davis)  
 88 (other students are talking a little while Silvia whispers to Mrs. Davis)  
 89 Davis: OK this is what she told me  
 90 S1: I know  
 91 (students read aloud in unison as Mrs. Davis writes on board)  
 92 S1: nineteen (begins)  
 93 Ss: ninety one (follow with her)

In line 78, Señora Rodriguez motions to Mrs. Davis from the side of the classroom for Mrs. Davis to call on Silvia. Mrs. Davis' utterance in line 79, *and...* with a relatively long pause, provides her opportunity to attend to what Señora Rodriguez is saying without interrupting the official floor at all. With lines 80-82, *Silvia can you tell me what...year it is?*, Mrs. Davis takes up Señora Rodriguez's suggestion and explicitly invites Silvia into the interaction. Silvia sits quietly at the desk without really responding while several of the other students begin to provide the answer. Rather than incorporate the other students' correct responses into the official floor, which would have been the easiest move, Mrs. Davis whispers, *Silvia* (line 85 and 86), and invites her to come and whisper the answer to her. After a bit of hesitation, Silvia approaches Mrs. Davis, who leans down as Silvia whispers into her ear. Mrs. Davis responds to the class in line 89, *OK this is what she told me*, and writes the correct response on the board which the other students repeat in lines 92 and 93, *nineteen ninety one*.

Whether Silvia did in fact whisper the correct answer cannot be determined by anyone but Mrs. Davis and Silvia. What is important is that Señora Rodriguez's and Mrs. Davis' interactional work integrated Silvia into the official classroom discourse, which all of the students witnessed. The students' repetition of Silvia's (presumed) contribution in lines 92 and 93, *nineteen ninety one*, which Mrs. Davis writes on the board, functions to position Silvia as a student who knows the answer and who contributes to the students' joint construction of the answer to the larger question, *What day is today?* that structures the beginning of the Opening activity. Continued positioning of Silvia as a legitimate participant in the classroom interaction (as opposed to a student who rarely responds to the teacher's questions, or

who rarely volunteers an answer) contributes to Silvia's understanding of herself, and to the other students' understanding of Silvia, as having the right to be a legitimate participant in the classroom interaction (c.f. Davies & Harre, 1990; Freeman, 1993; Ochs, 1993).

It is essential to point out that such differential positioning of students could have quite negative outcomes. In this case, for example, calling attention to Silvia could somehow mark her as different from the other students, and possibly encourage her to withdraw further from the class. Furthermore, teachers' assumptions about students' relative abilities can limit the educational opportunities of those students that the teachers assume have lower abilities (c.f. Oakes, 1985). However, my observations of Señora Rodriguez's and Mrs. Davis' behavior with their students, supported by my conversations with them about their practices, suggest that these teachers' differential positioning of students is based not on their assumptions of students' different abilities, but on their assumptions of students' different background knowledge, strengths, and needs. In fact, these two teachers, like the others at Oyster, seem to hold more or less equally high expectations for all of their students' abilities. Because the Oyster teachers assume that their students have unequal backgrounds, they need to position them differently in order that all students can meet those expectations.

Further reflecting Señora Rodriguez's efforts to include Silvia in the official classroom interaction, in the following excerpt from the beginning of the Spanish Opening, Señora Rodriguez directs her question in line 52, *Qué día es hoy* (What day is today?) specifically to Silvia. Señora Rodriguez's direct nomination of Silvia is marked because she does not generally call on students, but encourages them to bid for the opportunity to provide the right answer by raising their hands. More often than not, the students simply shout out an enthusiastic answer to the teacher's question.

- |    |            |  |
|----|------------|--|
| 52 | Rodriguez: | Qué día es hoy? (what day is today?)..                 |
| 53 |            | Silvia?  |
| 54 | Silvia:    | viernes (Friday)                                       |
| 55 | Rodriguez: | muy bien (very good)                                   |
| 56 |            | hoy es viernes (today is Friday) (writes on the board) |
| 57 | Rodriguez: | muy bien Silvia (very good Silvia)                     |

Line 52, *qué día es hoy?* (what day is today?) is the first question in the Opening activity, and it occurs immediately after the Spanish days of the week song (see discussion in last section). Since Silvia is a native Spanish-speaker, she presumably knows the answer to Señora Rodriguez's question. Without hesitation, Silvia provides the correct answer, *viernes* (Friday) in line 54. In line 55, Señora Rodriguez ratifies Silvia's contribution with her



utterance, *muy bien* (very good), which is consistent with her strategy of praising student contributions in Spanish, thereby providing additional comprehensible input, which enhances the SSL students' acquisition. Señora Rodriguez then repeats and expands on Silvia's contribution, *today is Friday* (line 56). Again in line 57, Señora Rodriguez praises Silvia's performance, this time including her name, *very good Silvia*. Señora Rodriguez's repeated praise of Silvia's contribution is marked; she rarely praises students more than once.

This interaction has several functions. With respect to the education of the entire class, one of the students has provided a correct answer, demonstrating that the task is possible, and providing correct input in Spanish for the others to acquire. With respect to Silvia, the teacher has drawn on her strength, Spanish fluency, to provide her the opportunity to demonstrate her knowledge of something the others don't necessarily know. This gives Silvia as well as the other students the opportunity to see Silvia as successful. As I mentioned above, repeated positioning of Silvia as successful in the classroom interaction allows all of the students, including Silvia, to think of Silvia as an equal participant who has important contributions to make to the class.

These team-teachers are also concerned about Juanito's access to educational opportunities because they claim that he began school with much lower skills than the other students. In both English and Spanish Openings, the teachers give special attention to his contributions and progress. For example in the English Opening, Mrs. Davis' ratification strategy is different with Juanito than with all of the other students. In general, Mrs. Davis ratifies the students' correct contributions by writing them on the board in the framework they fill in together to answer the organizing question, *what day is today*. Mrs. Davis rarely talks at this point in the activity. The exception to her exclusive use of written ratification can be found in her interaction with Juanito:

- |    |           |  |
|----|-----------|--|
| 21 | Davis:    | If you tell me                                 |
| 22 |           | If you tell me the day?                        |
| 23 |           | You have to tell me what letter it starts with |
| 24 | S1:       | F  |
| 25 | S2:       | Friday   |
| 26 | Davis:    | Juanito?                                       |
| 27 | Juanito:  | [F   |
| 28 | Ss:       | [F   |
| 29 | Ss:       | [Friday  |
| 30 | Davis:    | Juanito says it's Friday with a:n?             |
| 31 | Ss and T: | F  |

In this case, Mrs. Davis does not ratify the correct contribution that S1 made in line 24. Instead, she calls on Juanito directly in line 26, *Juanito?* to answer her question, which he does quietly in line 27 and at the same time as the other students. It is not apparent whether the other students heard Juanito's contribution or not. In line 30, Mrs. Davis invites the students to repeat Juanito's correct contribution in her utterance, *Juanito says it's Friday with a:n?* Her rising intonation and elongated vowel signal to the students that they continue with her, which they do in line 31. Mrs. Davis' ratification strategy functions to define Juanito as a legitimate participant who can and does achieve in class (c.f. Philips, 1983).

Señora Rodriguez's behavior is also marked with Juanito in the Spanish Opening. As the following excerpt illustrates, Señora Rodriguez interrupted the official class and invited me in from my position as observer to comment on Juanito's progress:

- |      |            |   |
|------|------------|---|
| 105  |            | Juanito ven acá (Juanito come here)                         |
| 106  |            | y escribir el ocho (and write the eight)                    |
| 107  |            | (students talk among themselves as Juanito writes)          |
| 108  | Rodriguez: | (after Juanito finishes writing) muy bien (very good)       |
| 109  |            | (students talking)  |
| 110  | Rodriguez: | (to researcher about Juanito) cuando él vino (when he came) |
| 111  |            | a la escuela por primera vez (to school for the first time) |
| 112  |            | en septiembre (in September)                                |
| 113  |            | no sabía ni el uno (he didn't know even the one)            |
| 114  |            | nada (nothing)  |
| 115  |            | no sabía (he didn't know)                                   |
| 116. |            | (lots of Ss talking)  |
| 117  |            | qué le ponía? (what did he put?)                            |
| 118  | Rodriguez: | (to students) <b>excuse me</b>                              |
| 119  |            | (students quiet down)                                       |
| 120  | Rodriguez: | (to researcher) este..(this)                                |
| 121  |            | yo le ponía por ejemplo (I put for example)                 |
| 122  |            | si yo le decía a Juanito (if I said to Juanito)             |
| 123  |            | qué es ésto (what is this)                                  |
| 124  |            | cuántos yo tengo en la mano (how many do I have             |
| in   |            | my hand)  |
| 125  |            | cuántos borradores (how many erasers)                       |
| 126  |            | Juanito no me podía decir (Juanito couldn't tell me)        |
| 127  |            | que tiene un borrador (that I have one eraser)              |
| 128  |            | y y él (and and he)   |

- 129 aprendió a contar (learned to count)  
 130 y después le ponía por ejemplo el uno  
 (and later I put for example)  
 131 y le decía (and I said to him)  
 132 uno y ésto aquí (one and this here)  
 133 cuántos hay aquí (how many are there here)  
 134 el no podía decirme (he couldn't tell me)  
 135 que ésto era uno y que ésto era uno  
 (that this was one and that this was one)  
 136 el concepto de de de (the concept of of of)  
 137 del símbolo con (of the symbol with)  
 138 y Juanito ahora *cuenta* hasta el veinte  
 (and Juanito now counts until twenty)  
 139 *reconoce* hasta el doce (he recognizes until  
 twelve)  
 140 Rebecca: (to Juanito who is listening and smiling proudly)  
 141 muy bien (very good)  
 142 has aprendido bastante no? (you've learned a lot,  
 haven't you)  
 143 Rodriguez: Sí (yes)  
 144 este año Juanito ha aprendido mucho mucho  
 mucho  
 (this year Juanito has learned much much much)  
 145 y yo estoy muy contenta con él (and I am very  
 happy with him)  
 146 Rodriguez: OK

As the above excerpt makes clear, Señora Rodriguez's interruption of the official class activity was relatively lengthy as she positively evaluated Juanito's academic progress. When it appeared to me that Señora Rodriguez had finished her story, I addressed Juanito directly in lines 141-142, *muy bien....has aprendido bastante no? (very good...you've learned a lot haven't you)*. Note that Señora Rodriguez, and not Juanito, responded to the question that I had directed to Juanito. Her utterance in line 143, *yes*, provides an example of the teacher talking for the student. Rather than allow Juanito to speak for himself, Señora Rodriguez continued in lines 144-145 to summarize his progress and her evaluation of that progress. Señora Rodriguez's comments make her stance toward Juanito, and toward the kind of progress he is making, clear to me, to Juanito, and to the rest of the class.

Also note Señora Rodriguez's emphasis on how much Juanito had learned, and on her strategy of encouraging him to participate in the official class activities even though his skills were lower than those of the other students. This reflects Señora Rodriguez's assumption that Juanito has different background knowledge based on his experiences outside of Oyster,

not that he has different abilities than the rest of the students. Señora Rodriguez's task, like that of the other teachers, is to observe what the individual student's strengths and weaknesses are to determine how to best help that student build on his/her strengths. Of course, Señora Rodriguez's public evaluation of Juanito's progress could backfire, for example, leading Juanito to see himself as different from and inferior to the other students in the class. Juanito's active participation and continued progress, however, suggest that Señora Rodriguez's efforts were at least not damaging and at best effective. In sum, it is not possible for teachers to know in advance what strategies will and will not work with which students. It is more often a case of principled trial and error.

I conclude this section with one final example of how Señora Rodriguez strives to provide equal educational opportunities to students that she assumes come from very unequal backgrounds. Based on her 21 years of experience (in 1993) as a Kindergarten teacher at Oyster Bilingual School, Señora Rodriguez assumes that there are cross-cultural differences in how the low-income Latino parents and the middle-income Anglo parents socialize their children at home, and that these differences have implications for student achievement in school. To address some of these differences, Señora Rodriguez invited a native Spanish-speaking educational toy specialist to meet the Latino parents at 6:00 one evening to talk, in Spanish, about toys that parents can use to support their children's education at home. Specifically, they talked about games that could reinforce students' recognition of patterns, a skill the students were working on in math. Señora Rodriguez explained to me that some of the Latino students could use extra support at home which she assumed they were not getting. It is possible to argue that Señora Rodriguez's differential positioning of the Latino and Anglo parents is discriminatory (she organized no such meeting for the Anglo parents), reflecting a negative assumption about Latino parental involvement. However, my observations of that meeting, of other interactions with Señora Rodriguez, students, and parents, and of other teacher, student, and/or parent interactions throughout the school, lead me to suggest that this differential positioning is an effort to accommodate the diversity throughout the school. Through such differential positioning, all members of the Oyster community can participate and achieve more or less equally.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has illustrated what equal educational opportunity means at Oyster Bilingual School, a "successful" public elementary school in Washington, D.C. Analysis of policy statements, interviews with policy

makers, administrators, teachers, parents, and students, and analysis of other site documents, enables an explicit statement of Oyster school ideologies. In this case, we saw that the Oyster two-way bilingual program, which encourages additive bilingualism in Spanish and English for all students, can be understood as in opposition to mainstream U.S. programs, which encourage language minority students to assimilate to language majority norms of interaction and interpretation in order to participate and achieve in school. To accomplish this, Spanish and English languages and speakers are to be distributed and evaluated equally throughout the school. For example, there are two teachers in every class, one Spanish-dominant who is to speak and be spoken to only in Spanish and one English-dominant who is to speak and be spoken to only in English; approximately half of the student population is native Spanish-speaking and approximately half is native English-speaking; approximately 50% of the content-area instruction is to be in Spanish and approximately 50% in English; and the students are to develop communicative competence, including academic competence, in both languages. However, because there are always differences between what people say they do and what they actually do, it is crucial to look beyond ideal plans to actual classroom implementation.

An ethnography of communication approach to analyzing classroom interaction, supported by participants' explanations of what they do and why, provides a means of seeing how the ideal plan is translated into practice. My analysis demonstrated how the kindergarten team-teachers worked together to distribute and evaluate both languages and speakers more or less equally, and revealed systematic discrepancies between ideal plan and actual implementation which were then explained by consideration of Oyster's sociolinguistic context. Perhaps more importantly, the analysis illustrated how teachers translate their assumptions about students' diverse backgrounds, strengths, and needs into strategies that position all students to achieve the equally high expectations that the Oyster teachers hold for them.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I use the school's real name with permission and encouragement of school administrators. The names of all individuals have been changed.

<sup>2</sup> Consistent with the way the Oyster educators refer to themselves and each other regardless of the language they are speaking, I use Spanish address terms (*Señora*, *Señor*) to refer to the Spanish-dominant educators and English address forms (*Ms.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.*) to refer to the English-dominant educators. Thanks to Isolda Carranza for making me aware of the need to point out this use of address terms.

<sup>3</sup> See Freeman, 1993: ch. 8 for extensive analysis and transcripts in their entirety.

<sup>4</sup> My transcription conventions are as follows. The line numbers on the excerpts correspond to the line numbers on the original transcripts. Following Tannen (1989)

and Chafe (1986), each line represents an intonation unit. Three dots indicates a pause, a colon indicates sound stretch, and a question mark signals rising intonation (not a grammatical question). Brackets preceding words in consecutive lines signal overlap. Codeswitching is indicated by bold face. I include information about who says what to whom, loudness, nonverbal cues, and translations in parentheses.

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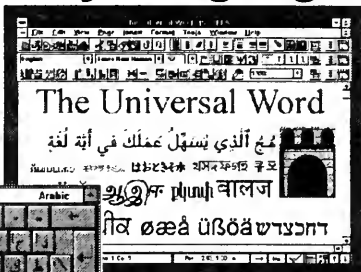
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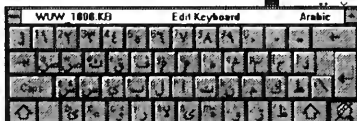
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*University of California, Los Angeles*

### **PROFILE**

Otto Santa Ana A. is a professor in the newly created César Chávez Center for Chicana and Chicano Studies at UCLA. He is interested in a wide range of topics including sociolinguistics, language acquisition, language evaluation, and language policy. He has a particular interest in borderland communities, ethnicity as a social category, and languages in contact. Prior to joining the UCLA community, he taught at the University of New Mexico. He has also held teaching posts at the University of Pennsylvania, where he obtained his Ph.D. in linguistics; the Université de Paris III; as well as in other universities and colleges. Santa Ana is also a graduate of the University of Arizona, Tucson. His contributions to Chicano Studies follow from his characterization of Chicano languages and dialects which developed from his doctoral dissertation, a cross-generational sociolinguistic study in four barrios of Los Angeles. He has published several articles and has contributed to edited volumes. His publications include: 1) "English and the Nature of the Chicano Language Setting," and 2) "Chicano English Evidence for the Exponential Hypothesis: A Variable Rule Pervades Lexical Phonology." He has recently completed an article on vowel reduction and an article on sonority in Chicano English, and he is about to launch two large-scale studies, one on the sociolinguistic construction of ethnicity in the English of Los Angeles Chicanos, and the other, a comparative study of spoken vernaculars, Mexican and Chicano Spanish.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Prof. Santa Ana has been analyzing the languages of Chicanos (predominantly Spanish and English) in Los Angeles, and his characterization of Chicano English, in particular, contributes to its being

considered an ethnic dialect of English-speaking Chicanos. His work looks at the sociolinguistic nature of the language setting of Chicanos and at the socialization units that allow interaction, which, in turn, result in speech communities with common patterns of language use. Santa Ana's zeal is evident when he describes the full range of the linguistic practices and speech communities of Chicanos in Los Angeles, when he calls for the development of more effective ways to analyze these communities, and when he shows the need to take a second look at societal language attitudes. Santa Ana's work has vital implications for the educational institutions and may transform our way of conceiving the nature of Chicano languages and Chicano life in the U.S. A former student of William Labov, Santa Ana is part of a special generation of sociolinguists, a native come home.

## THE INTERVIEW

Baquedano-López: *Tell us a little about yourself, about growing up Chicano. Where were you born? Tell us about your schooling experiences.*

Santa Ana: I'm from Miami, Arizona, a mining town. My grandfather was born in nearby Silver City, New Mexico, and his father too, but he came to Miami with his bride, and my father was born there. It's been the center of our world for a long time. On my father's side we were already in New Mexico when the change of flags took place in 1848. Growing up was growing up *mexicano* for me. Until very recently, Southwest mining towns were islands isolated from the rest of the world. For example, the main road to Phoenix was only open in 1954, so Miami was isolated from urban areas. Second, it was originally a boom town with a top population of 30,000 after WWI. People from all over came to seek their fortunes: *mexicano* hard rock miners came from Parral (Chihuahua, Mexico), via Silver City. There were also Italians, Slavs, and the Anglo population. Apaches, whose land it was originally, also lived there. I grew up among people speaking different languages. I took multilingualism for granted. Additionally, although my mother was born in Miami, she and her family were driven out of the U.S. during the Great Repatriation of *mexicanos* of the 1930s. She grew up in Juárez (Chihuahua, Mexico), speaking almost only Spanish while my dad grew up bilingual.

I was raised in this sort of setting. I was sensitive to language. My mom tells the story that when I was in first grade, one day I announced: "*Mamá ya no voy a hablar español. Speak English to me*" (see glossary). It broke her heart because Spanish was our language of *cariño*. I stopped speaking Spanish. She repeats the anecdote with irony because of all of her

kids, I am the most interested in language and the one who ultimately became a professor of linguistics.

Racial segregation in Arizona schools ended formally in the year I was born, but it persisted under a thin surface. However, more important than the cultural distinctions I already described, growing up in Miami meant growing up working class. My father worked as a teamster in various mines. We grew up in a class-based society. There were the well-to-do people who were the engineers, whether from Chicago, Canada or Perú, and they lived up on Inspiration Hill.<sup>1</sup> The rest of us, whether poor white or Mexican lived in the canyons: Mexican Canyon, Turkey Shoot Canyon, and Red Springs Canyon. Social interaction was class-based. Basically you hung out with your class of people. From the standpoint of cultural diversity, the direction of change in Miami was toward a class-based system—working class people of all types socialized more and more. In a shrinking town, with a smaller population, ethnicity was played down.

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**"Ethnicity is a matter of  
structured contrasts in a society"**

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Our school system aimed to create dependable workers. The major requirement was regular and punctual class attendance. When I was a student, there was only one math class, algebra, in high school. With no particular ambition or effort I completed all graduation requirements by my junior year. As for school counseling, my sister, who has a Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics from Berkeley, was told by her biology teacher that she really should not aspire to become a veterinarian; I was told that maybe I could get an apprenticeship and become an electrician. We must give credit to our parents' steadfast faith in us and hard physical work on our behalf that allowed us to pass over these institutional deprecations of the spirit.

I grew up in a town where everybody knew each other. Everyone knew me as *el hijo de Santa Ana*. However, being Chicano became less and less important to my generation. Class-based distinctions had been more important in Miami. When I moved to Tucson, an urban area, I faced the issue of ethnicity full-force. There I found anonymity for the first time. And there I realized that people labeled you on the basis of your appearance.

Baquedano-López: *So, in terms of ethnicity, there is a striking difference between urban settings and rural settings.*

Santa Ana: Ethnicity is a matter of structured contrasts in a society. It's more than a matter of cultures in contact, which we had in Miami; rather, it is superordination and subordination within society. Chicano ethnicity is a response to systemic relegation of Mexicans to marginalized sectors of society. In Miami and other communities in the Southwest, American mining interests established the economic and social hierarchy from the beginning, and racism was overt. In the years that I was growing up in Miami, as the population shrank, racism became less prominent and a class system became more developed, so ethnicity became less pronounced. In the urban U.S., ethnicity is certainly salient, since the structural sources are unchallenged.

Baquedano-López: *What was significant about your school years?*

Santa Ana: That they were mediocre. In Miami there were few alternatives. I was very ill-prepared for academics. In spite of this, my family is distinctive, since my brother and sisters have received advanced degrees. My brother is the major ethics attorney for HUD. One sister has a master's degree. I mentioned the second sister who is a geneticist, and yet she was told that she didn't have enough native ability to even become a veterinarian, which was her childhood dream. We [children] are, the four of us, highly educated. My dad earned his high school diploma. My mom only received an eighth grade education. So in our family we had a tremendous drive for education. We had a fierce work ethic and a focused orientation towards schooling as a means to escape life in the orbit of the mines.

As I stated before, the focus of my intellectual interest revolved around language. Beyond the simple diversity of languages, which was fascinating, I sensed that there was something unjust about teachers' attitudes toward non-standard English-speaking students in our educational system. These beginnings led me to social science topics. Language topics have been my predilection.

Baquedano-López: *How does it feel for you to be working with your "home community?"*

Santa Ana: I am elated. There is so much to do. At UCLA last week we had Eduardo Hernández-Chávez<sup>2</sup> speak on language policy and bilingual education. When I was an undergraduate his book, *El lenguaje de los chicanos*, appeared. Also in 1980, Fernando Peñalosa published a book entitled *Chicano sociolinguistics*. I wore out my copies, I read them so much. Twenty years ago Peñalosa wrote a piece that characterizes what was needed for a basic understanding of Chicano sociolinguistics. His call for basic research remains in large part unanswered. It will require more than today's handful of Chicano scholars to complete the work. Since my

graduate days I have always wanted to combine theoretically interesting work with research that is relevant to the larger Chicano community. At times I did not feel that the kinds of topics emphasized in graduate school were especially relevant. Now in Los Angeles, the *ombligo* of Chicano culture, and at UCLA, I am even more charged up to do this kind of work, as well as to nurture another generation of scholars.

Baquedano-López: *Were those topics you were asked to study related to linguistic minorities?*

Santa Ana: In hindsight, yes. One topic, which is relevant to the whole U.S. Latino community, is a needed follow-up to Shana Poplack's 1980 study of the Puerto Rican community in Philadelphia. All the material was on tape; what was sought was a quantitative analysis supplementing her original qualitative analysis. She found Puerto Rican children speaking both African-American English and vernacular white English. This is a social function difference. This topic was both interesting and it would have allowed me to finish my dissertation work more quickly, yet I didn't want to do it. I felt that my community had not been looked at seriously since Benji Wald's work in the early '80s.

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**"The potential that empirical linguistics has  
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I also sensed indifference among sociolinguists to research done on and among Chicanos. People were kind, but they didn't see any theoretical interests or real social concerns, since apparently, all social issues had already been addressed in African-American English. These needed only to be translated, so to speak, into other ethnic dialect settings. I resisted that. So when I finished my Ph.D. exams, within a few months I was in the field here in Los Angeles. Although I applied for funding and eventually got it, I was in the field long before the money arrived. I was very eager to go to L.A. and to begin my work. That was extremely important for me.

In my work I have tended to use a sophisticated level of analysis which has proven to isolate me from a wider audience. At the same time, what I want to do is to leave a legacy of research that is well-grounded so that people will continue the work and will have a good base to build on. So that's a predominant element of my research goal.

Baquedano-López: *Where do you see the variationists going?*

Santa Ana: Well, I see that people are relatively timid about linking social concerns or social theory issues to the concerns of language. What we tend to do is replicate the same studies. I can show you ((gets up and picks up three journals)) the same kinds of analysis that were done fifteen years ago are being done with greater linguistic sophistication. There is a strong tendency to do work which has less to do with society than with language *per se*: "particles, pragmatic variables, subject omission, linguistic assimilation of a pair of variables," I'm just reading the topics of a major journal.

The potential that empirical linguistics has to make evaluations of social theory has not really been tapped. It is a difficult job. It's more difficult than pursuing a pure linguistic track, looking mostly at language *per se*. It demands transdisciplinary thinking. The sort of work that Gumperz began, that Hymes talked about programatically, and that Labov does with his unparalleled creativity for coming up with ways to address long-standing major questions; these and other like-minded programs have not been taken up by another generation doing the socio- of sociolinguistics. Rather, the focus has been on linguistics. On our behalf, what we've done is develop an ample toolbox of skills. I think it's a matter of asking the difficult questions, of unleashing our graduate students to explore non-linguistic research domains, and of tentatively beginning to address these issues. For example, there is a huge literature on the important social issue of language attitudes. Most of the work has been done utilizing positivist forms of social psychology. It's astonishing to me that more varied sociolinguistic research has not taken up the topic. Giles and his colleagues have repeatedly called for this and have more than once noted that their theories about language attitudes are, at times, simplistic.<sup>3</sup>

I think that serious consideration of social theory should be addressed. We should be talking about issues that are important to a large social science audience. That's why I'm interested in the topic of ethnicity as it is expressed in language. It was only a dozen years ago that linguists who wanted to address issues of language and gender broke away from the traditional studies and began to develop a large and very interesting body of research. Of course a lot of it was sloppy, but also assertive, challenging, and always interesting. Ultimately sociolinguistics has grown because of these new ways of looking at language in society. I feel that ethnicity might follow that example. Other social categories such as class, age, and race still are not fully explored. At least, not as fully explored as they should be. I think that would be attractive to a wider range of graduate students. We should also begin to address the very legitimate questions that undergraduates always pose.

Baquedano-López: *So in this long standing interest that you have on ethnicity as a category and on the construction of ethnicity in speech, how do you intend to capture this expression of ethnicity?*

Santa Ana: Well, what is ethnicity? At a community level, ethnic expression of one community contrasts with that of other communities, while at the level of face-to-face interaction it is remarkably mutable. Its expression changes from moment to moment in apparent relation to the purpose of the speech. It's basically a micro-analysis versus macro-analysis quandary that has been a long standing issue in sociology. How do you study this sort of thing? It is not sufficient to utilize a single paradigm, such as the variationist paradigm, which has tended to assume that social categories are fixed, not mutable. How do you study ethnic expression in speech? The methodologies have to accommodate the phenomenon. I propose linking quantitative linguistics methods with those of other social sciences to address ethnicity in its multiplex presentation.

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**"My research goal is to provide the community  
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In my own research I originally worked in the macro-framework with a community-level view. Yet there were significant interpersonal behaviors that I could not capture within this framework. On the other hand, I retain the desire to quantize interpersonal behavior and to address the methodological concern Labov characterized as the "observer's paradox." I would provide for greater community input, in terms of people from a neighborhood involved in multiple interviewer data gathering. This extends the reach of researchers beyond their own interaction. Labov has done much the same in his long-standing collaboration with Philadelphia African-American community member Wendell Harris. I would also seek out or provide experimental settings where people who otherwise would not come into contact with each other might come to speak together. Ultimately, I would have access to the speech of a small group of people talking in a wider range of contexts and to a wider range of interactants, and then attempt to describe their verbal ethnic expression with much the same variationist analytic techniques used for community-wide studies. This is the methodological direction I am taking, and I have written pieces discussing these methods. I also have an ongoing pilot study. Linking such

data to a theory of ethnicity is another concern, but I think there is a direction of research for this as well. John Rickford and others have recently revived studies of *style* as a category of language. What I am exploring may well be another approach to stylistic variation. I think in that way I can demonstrate that socially interesting topics intersect with those that are linguistically interesting, and we might ultimately shed light on issues that are important to a larger audience.

Baquedano-López: *It seems that your project has a component of empowerment or at least to allow the community to have their own means of recording their local histories, how did you come up with this idea?*

Santa Ana: Chicano social scientists are particularly aware of the abusive misrepresentation of our community by indifferent or mistaken social science researchers. During the 1960s the damning effects of treating Chicanos as objects of study rather than as subjects was a regular topic for articles. Sociolinguistics is also a child of the 1960s, and does not have such a long and checkered history as disciplines such as anthropology. However, there have been splits between researchers and community, such as the Ann Arbor court case.<sup>4</sup> One step is having empathetic views of the community; the next is being its advocate for important social issues; the third step is to operate with the idea that the community members, who provide the researcher with data and knowledge, should be provided with the means to articulate their own vision and voice. Recently an interesting volume by D. Cameron and others<sup>5</sup> matched my interest in giving people the microphone. Although the term "empowering" might be misconstrued, my research goal is to provide the community with interviewing skill to document their lives in their own voices. We will provide the technical skills to permit their capturing the daily struggles and joys of the lives of focal members of the community and their contacts with others, including peers, elders, children, coworkers, and neighbors. As the community members document their lives, data on language use and social interaction will also be gathered. Our academic questions can be addressed from a secondary analysis of natural speech in context. In exchange for these data, we offer tangible returns for our intrusion into people's personal lives: video tapes documenting a part of their lives. This is an opportunity to give permanent voice to their views and understandings of the world.

Giving people control of the microphone has its distinct advantages. You ask how it developed in my own experience. I was trying to do interviews with Chicanas. I knew many of the women socially. They were vocal and linguistically interesting. They played with language among friends, even as I sat in the corner drinking a beer just listening to them. However, when I interviewed them, Marta and María and Josefa, who I knew to be wonderful speakers and story tellers became very cool and



reserved. I tried the group setting, with a group of *comadres* who enjoyed talking among themselves. Well they laughed, but it was almost always only when they spoke among themselves. When they talked to me, they suppressed their range of speech. Group interviews were still limiting.

Ultimately I decided on the method I am piloting now: training people in the basics of interviewing; teaching them how to use the equipment; outlining the basic goals; and providing guidance as they gather oral histories. This permits more of what comes naturally, that is, people talking among close friends share their experiences and express their feelings with one another. Optimally, only secondarily would the sociolinguist describe and measure their language. In contrast what they do with the language on tape is develop what's important to them. And often what's important to them is their histories, oral histories, of who they are and what their experiences are.

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In my 1988 fieldwork I conducted over one hundred and sixty interviews in L.A. Many of which turned out to be the beginnings of an oral history. Many people would say, "Yes please, I've never had a chance to talk about these concerns, and I think I'd like to leave something for my children, for my grandchildren." When someone talks about their crossing the border and hiding their oldest child under their coat, or being in the back of a pickup truck under bundles, and then under boxes, with *sandías* on top, when they talk about dealing with the *migra* or dealing with racism, or dealing with the *coyotes*, then it's important to capture those stories. Those stories are extraordinary. In turn, the children of those immigrants also have incredible stories. A woman describes her experience of finding her grown son *descalzo* and completely loaded, a drug addict, and how she recognized him by his feet as she was driving on Huntington Drive.<sup>6</sup> Her son! She stopped and picked him up, washed him, he slept for three days; then her husband decided to throw him out. She had an opportunity to fight his decision, but she also prayed asking God if he was going to be like this forever, "*Recójelo!* Take him back." Well, her son died. She described her incredible guilt, because she had an opportunity to at least try and she didn't. She allowed herself to be passive and she regrets it. And so she tells this incredible story which I heard but I would never be able to replicate. Those

are the kinds of stories that I think families who work with sociolinguists should have at the very minimum.

So going back to the basic issue, it's a natural extension of my perspective to incorporate these riches that have not been included, and also to utilize methodologies that have not been exploited. They lend themselves both to the community and to the linguist. So I think everyone benefits.

Baquedano-López: *We talked about ethnicity, we talked about the people, the participants, of course, this is all interrelated. In 1993 you wrote "Chicano English and the nature of Chicano Language Setting." Setting has been an idea that has been going on for a while in sociolinguistics. What is new, what's different about this way of looking at setting; is it the same, is it different?*

Santa Ana: It's different. It's *language setting* in that paper, not *setting*. It's not setting as Hymes discusses it. *Language setting* combines a typology of the different language varieties with the demographic proportions of those spoken varieties. In the case of Chicanos of Los Angeles, it is a characterization of the whole *mexicano*-Chicano community, which has gotten more complicated over time. Originally, for example, in my hometown in 1910, the great majority of the *mexicanos* were Spanish-speakers and most were monolingual. There were bilinguals in smaller proportions. Of this subset, the largest group were *mexicanos* who spoke English as a second language. Only a few were native speakers of English. If the 1910 language setting was relatively simple, the present language setting of Latino cities such as Los Angeles is not.

How shall we characterize the multiple generations, different levels of English, different types of English developing, the rise of English monolingualism, and the ongoing flow of monolingual Spanish speakers feeding the pipeline? The diversity of language encompassed among the population of Chicanos in Los Angeles is complicated. There are subcultures with distinct language styles or vocabulary and their functions, the Pachuco<sup>7</sup> of the 1940s is only one example. Now there are cyber-punk Chicanos, as well as low-riders, there are *cholos* and *cholas*<sup>8</sup>, the college educated ethnics, and so on. The language range is wide. At the same time, we have the *mexicano* from the rural *rancho* much like those who came North in 1910. Previously, only men alone came North, then families arrived from Mexico, and a range of Mexican Spanish continues to be added to the Chicano language setting.

In that paper I wanted to repudiate the very common stereotyping of the Chicano language situation: Most generally, the false view that the Chicano community is linguistically homogeneous, that they all are bilingual, or that they all speak Spanish. Or that no one really speaks Standard English. These generalizations are patently false. And yet, in that

paper I provided very recent quotations which demonstrated the resilience of the stereotype. Just today I found such a statement: "The Chicano has been made to believe that his dialect or *caló* is inappropriate in the educational system." Well, the disparagement of Chicano dialects is unfortunate. Although the passage was written 20 years ago, the negative evaluation of the speech of Chicanos, especially in the schools, has not changed. It may be misleading, however, to call the non-standard dialect of Spanish, *caló*. Call it Chicano Spanish. *Caló* is understood, even in Texas as far as I understand, as an argot. It's the *yerga* of the underworld. My overriding concern as a linguist talking about Los Angeles Chicanos is to characterize the full bounty of our languages.

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**"One of the commonsensical views that is false  
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Baquedano-López: *We haven't talked about the specifics of Chicano English as a dialect on its own right, not as some kind of interlanguage which will eventually assimilate to the main language.*

Santa Ana: I think Chicano English is like all ethnic dialects. One of the commonsensical views that is false is that Chicano English is just Spanish-accented English. What it is is an ethnic dialect, which will continue as long as the forces that create ethnic groups are maintained. The continued divergence of African-American English is indication that racism persists. The attitude that the majority of the voting public have about immigrants in the 1994 California Referendum to deny undocumented immigrants basic social services, Proposition 187, indicates that we as Chicanos are not considered North Americans but foreigners on our own land. This is a sign that the forces that create division, that create ethnic groups, continue to be very powerful. As I searched for ways to characterize Chicano English I began with the idea to attack the commonsensical falsehoods that persist. In this journal and in my writings in general, I may be preaching to the converted. So I might change my tactics, but I am not quite sure how to get the message out to the groups that should be hearing it, in particular educators. One of the major focuses in my research will be on language attitudes. I think that's one of the major thrusts that I will pursue in the future to talk about what Chicano English is.

Baquedano-López: *In your work, you often make reference to implications of sociolinguistic work to the education of linguistic minority children or youth.*

*In what way do you envision your research impacting these different educational research areas?*

Santa Ana: It is still a promissory note. When I first did graduate work at the University of Arizona, I took a class from Ken and Yetta Goodman. They do very interesting work on literacy, and I was attracted to such research. Nothing could be more relevant to a Chicano sociolinguist than linguistic minority education. However, my interest in linguistics at that time predominated. In graduate work, I did not pursue the kind of program that I originally envisioned linking high-quality technical skills with applied orientations. I ended up following a program stressing theory and technical skills. Since then I've read educational research avidly. I married an educational professional. My wife, Thelma, is Director of Instruction in a public school district and has a Ph.D. in Education, so over dinner there is frequent discussion of language and education issues. Of the major language issues that I see, one is the difficulty of implementing linguistic notions to the exigencies of social institutions.

The institutional translation of the notion of linguistic competence into language proficiency is one issue. The use of the designation Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is a concern. I spent a summer working with schools in L.A., and spent some time listening to LEP kids. I was interested in the effect of bilingual education on language development. I should begin by stating that I remain thoroughly convinced of the value of bilingual education; all children should be educated in multilingual settings. However, the children are selected for bilingual education by means of a test that determines their 'proficiency' in English, which is a reasonable legal characterization of the linguistic notion of competence. The LEP kids have the grand opportunity to be educated in both languages, but they are also saddled with the LEP designation. As elementary school children in Los Angeles in the 1990s, they invariably learn English as natives. However, also quite fairly, they must undergo testing to remove the LEP designation. The tests given are theoretically sophisticated at best. Often, unfortunately, the teachers administering the tests do not understand them very well. Again, the kids are growing up in an English environment, and so they acquire English; there is no way that you can keep a kid from acquiring English unless you lock him in a closet. If they start school at age five, by the time they are ten or twelve, they are patently native English speakers. However, a literacy and speech exam is needed to confirm their capabilities.

I asked to see the test being administered, and a ten-year-old who is from El Salvador was brought in. After speaking to him I told the test administrator that he was not a LEP kid. When I just talked to him, he spoke English with a non-standard dialect. His Spanish was not fluid; he was much more comfortable in English. On a lark I took the test with him. He did better than I. He was much more test wary. But we both failed that

exam. By the measure of the test, which uses literacy and test-taking metrics to evaluate the students, neither of the native speakers of English (the kid or me) could be designated as proficient in English. This problem is worse among teenage LEP students who are subject to less-than-stimulating ESL classes in high schools rather than the rich bilingual classes that elementary students attend. Do not get me wrong. Mixing language and law, pedagogy and politics, is a challenge. This is a complex issue. Linguists cannot be the final arbiters. However, we should be involved in the institutional policy making *and* implementation. Here sociolinguists must continue to be advocates on behalf of linguistic minority children.

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Another educational problem concerns prevailing language attitudes. Here, the well-known Pygmalion effect is remarkably strong: it's part of the commonsensical views that are reinforced daily in our society. These are hegemonic views of what is appropriate speech; which reflect the values of our society. And those values affect the way children are judged. I take as an important task to talk strongly about teacher attitudes about children. It's a world class problem, and I can give a concrete example.

José Ríos is a second grader now. Thelma pointed him out to me as being a sullen, stubborn child. He was not doing well in kindergarten. The teacher told Thelma, who at that time was a school principal: "He is not going to do well, his siblings all do poorly in school, maybe we should put him in special ed." Thelma took an interest in him, befriended him, talked regularly with him, and recognized that the kid was in the normal range, with normal capabilities, and no factors indicating that a special education setting was required. But the attitude the teacher had exacerbated his differences and the reputation of his family into a problem. Thelma placed him in a high-interaction program. Thelma insisted that he be given preferential treatment. During this year, his first grade, he came one day and knocked on Thelma's door. His teacher had sent him. He came with a book in hand. He read aloud and at the end of reading his story he said, "*Ya yo puedo leer.*" He still was little José, but the principal had intervened on this child's behalf. It made all the difference. Thelma noted with satisfaction that his personality blossomed and that he was popular in class. In the second year, José got placed with a teacher who knew his family and expected the same. In the mid-year Thelma said: "My God I saw José."

And I asked, "What is he doing, what's he reading now?" "The teacher says he can't read." And so Thelma tried to re-orient his teacher to the fact that José could read when he walked into her second grade class. It was her attitude that needed adjustment.

That's where sociolinguists can have the most important impact on affecting the lives of children on a wide scale. Labov did a tremendous amount of good regaling the educational psychologists and others who believed in cultural and linguistic deprivation. As for language attitudes, we have not done enough. This is because we really don't understand the root causes of these commonsensical societal attitudes or how to resist and change them.

And yet it's very clear that they do change. Twenty years ago we all believed that women were incapable of being fighter pilots or that smoking was not damaging to your health. Common sense was contrary to the obvious: that women are as capable as men in almost everything, and that if you inhale hot tar into your soft tissues, it's going to do some damage. Those are pretty obvious things. We can change societal attitudes. Likewise, commonsensical people continue to believe that kids who speak nonstandard English are less intelligent. These basic attitudes, deep in our bones, have never been seriously undermined. Here's another area where sociolinguistic impact must be felt.

Baquedano-López: *In terms of Chicano Spanish, what approach are you taking? How do you intend to describe it?*

Santa Ana: We begin by looking at its source. The majority of people in Los Angeles since 1920 have been immigrants from the Altos de Jalisco and Bahía de Michoacán. That area has been actually quite well-studied in terms of economic history because it's been a focus of Mexico to U.S. demographic studies. The great majority of the Los Angeles Chicano population have their roots there. The idea then would be to begin with a baseline of rural Mexican Spanish. But little of this work has been done. Someone wrote a traditional description of Zamora, the second largest city in Michoacán, and so we have in one sense a very good opportunity to pursue the studies. A lot of work has been expended investigating the proposition that Chicano Spanish is a reduced form of Mexican Spanish. Ana Celia Zentella presented a review of studies on the Spanish of U.S. Latinos. There's a continuing debate as to what's going on. Is there loss or simplification or convergence or not? She listed the people who have characterized aspects of Chicano or Latino language in terms of convergence. And that's Manuel Gutiérrez, Flora Kline, Beatriz Lavandera, and Zentella herself. On the other hand, there are people who say that there's no convergence, loss, or simplification, and these are relatively few people, including Rosaura Sánchez. In the Caribbean dialects, Caribbean

source dialects, we have much more information. But there is so little information on the Mexican dialects that we may be shooting into the air without a clear target or measuring without having a good baseline.

So the basic research proposal that Claudia Parodi<sup>9</sup> and I are elaborating is to begin at the beginning. Look at the basic sociolinguistic description of the Spanish in Michoacán and Jalisco, do it with the sense that one person can't get a full range of the Spanish, yet we can't presume to get the money to do a broad-based multiple levels of attack and approach on the characterization of Spanish as I have proposed for Chicano English. What these linguists I just mentioned have done, is the grueling linguistic analysis aspects, and we can build on their thinking by looking at an actual corpus of Mexican Spanish. We can lay to rest some of the issues or at least we can present a new perspective on some of those questions. That's one research agenda I'll be pursuing. It's a relatively straightforward approach.

The reason that I have focused on rural Michoacán is that it turns out that Mexican migration to the U.S. hinges on one judgment. If you are from a small town, or if you have a modicum of education, or if you feel that you have a particular talent, you're more likely to go to an urban area in Mexico and go to Guadalajara from rural Jalisco. If you are a *ranchero*, and you have no education, if you can only depend on your own physical manual labor, you are not going to go to the urban areas because there are already many day laborers who work for nothing and are starving. What you do is go to the United States. You travel northward because, although you'll still be doing manual labor, you have an opportunity to make more money and send more money home. And that split is quite interesting because it suggests a greater divergence of rural Mexican Spanishes from urban-centered norms. But that's all high speculation because we don't have any data.

Even since December my ideas have changed on migration in doing the reading and talking to people. I had originally, with Claudia Parodi, considered studying Jalisco alone and studying the rural versus urban dimension, but the demographic readings suggest a different track. That leaves urban Jalisco norms out of the loop for the Spanish that arrives here and as the source of Chicano Spanish. Beyond the phonology, a study of slang may be interesting because rural vocabulary many not undergo the rapid change that we see in urban areas. So that would be a nice kind of study to look at.

*Baqueda-López: In 1994 you joined the César Chávez Center for Chicana and Chicano Studies. There was intense student activism to get a Chicano Center going. What does it mean to you to be part of this new center?*

*Santa Ana:* All of us grow up thinking, feeling, that we are somehow unique and that there is something we have to do in life. A lot of life for me, however, had been in preparation. Graduate school was an extended

adolescence in a sense that one is stuck in gestation for an overly long period of time. But ever since I was a child I always thought that Los Angeles was the center of the world. When I had the opportunity—I've told you already, my graduate dissertation research—I wanted to focus on Los Angeles and pass over potentially easier, more accessible venues. So L.A. is the place.

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**"There are no more visionaries,  
there are only hard workers,  
and I think that's all who we are"**

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As for the moral dimension, César Chávez epitomizes for me the Chicano whose sense of mission shaped an exceptional life of service for his community. To be able to serve in Los Angeles in an institution that bears his name and which is constituted to continue his mission is a high honor. I have held education very highly in my own life. I consider education to be a fulfilling and worthy life pursuit. So my dedication to UCLA students is paramount. Even more so since the students had such a central role in the creation of the Chávez Center. Not just the students, but the faculty, because there were seventeen faculty who were directly involved over twenty years to develop a program and with their efforts, to try to develop a department. And the whole political and nonpolitical Chicano and Latino community pulling together. To be one of the few people who will give shape to the Chávez Center is extremely important for me. It may be the reason why I'm here. It justifies why you work so hard even though you don't know where you are going. To have this opportunity is awesome. And here I am talking about language in this setting! Frankly, language has been much less a focus in traditional Chicano Studies research than I think it should. I think my role is to bring language to the foreground of our research. And since my predilection has always been to be multidisciplinary, that I am apart of a research center which is conceived to be a center advocating a transdisciplinary curriculum, it's simply overwhelming.

Our goals include creating a 21st-century curriculum. We begin by presuming that a large part of the knowledge that we teach our students will be outdated in ten or fifteen years, so what we provide are critical skills and ways of thinking for students at the undergraduate level. Then we provide them with a sense of how they can fulfill their responsibility as the few who are lucky enough to become university students from our large and relatively undereducated population. It's really an extraordinary opportunity and I feel very humbled. We have so many plans. I'm very grateful for the other people working for the center. We share a strong view of our mission. We



have been able to coalesce because we have so much of a sense of our mission already, and we've also felt very supported by fellow faculty members, the students, the administration, as well as the community. We are working as hard as we can to reach our targets well and quickly, but I don't know how long the honeymoon period will persist.

Baquedano-López: *Especialty with the political changes in the country.*

Santa Ana: Yeah, well, there is even more reason for us to be here, and, unfortunately, the incentives have not gotten smaller, the problems are larger. And I think we are all going to be pulling for the same goals. It's an awesome responsibility and at times I feel daunted, but, you know, you push as much as you can and you hope to do as much as you can. It's a brand new Center. We hope not to burden ourselves with the problems of the past and to try to use our vision for the future to propel us in the right directions. But it's not something that any one individual will be able to do. There are no more visionaries, there are only hard workers, and I think that's all who we are.

The people that constitute the Center are a wonderful group of people. Their academic credentials are impeccable. That's the primary requirement. In this anti-affirmative action climate, to suggest that any of the faculty who were chosen for the Center couldn't compete nationally for any position in their field would hinder us. This allows us the freedom to plan our curriculum and research with fewer empty criticisms. We will be working together for a program which reconsiders 19th-century views on what knowledge is, and the traditional disciplinary boundaries of knowledge, and which will question the traditional assumptions of what research frameworks should look like. I think it is going to be very exciting. It's more than I could 've ever hoped for.

## CONCLUSION

In this interview, Prof. Santa Ana discussed important topics relevant to sociolinguistics and language minorities, the theme of this issue of *IAL*. One such topic, ethnicity, is among many of the urban phenomena which are central to the study of linguistics as well as ethnic minorities. Since, as Santa Ana indicates, an urban setting allows the possibility of observing the contrasts and the development of hierarchical divisions which are often based on race and linguistic characteristics, a discussion of sociolinguistics and language minorities entails discussion of racism, divisiveness, and language attitudes. We have been reminded that these attitudes, which have dramatic consequences for Latino children in educational settings, can

change, and often do change. That is enough reason, I think, to aggressively challenge these negative societal attitudes toward linguistic minorities in general.

Santa Ana's work may very well become the cornerstone of a new way to approach Chicano languages, and indeed, Chicano Studies in general. As he has indicated, while it is important to acknowledge the achievements of earlier work done on Chicano sociolinguistics, it is equally important to understand that many of the questions that have been posed still deserve their due response. What's more, there are still questions that need to be properly asked. With the breadth of analytical skills amassed today, for sociolinguists, linguists, and applied linguists, "it's a matter of asking the difficult questions" and trying to answer them. Granted, not an easy task, but one which is particularly doable as we seem to be inevitably headed towards more dialogue among the social sciences. The study, for example, of ethnicity, with its multiple modalities, can only be properly studied by interweaving methodologies. The questioning of traditional research assumptions and approaches will indeed make the results of future research both socially and linguistically appealing, and ultimately, beneficial to the very people who provide us with the continued opportunity to remain in the field.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS

<i>cariño</i>	affection, love
<i>comadres</i>	women who sponsor children at baptism. Extended to mean close affinity among women
<i>coyotes</i>	people who are paid exorbitantly to arrange ways for immigrants to cross the U.S. border
<i>descalzo</i>	barefooted, shoeless
<i>migra</i>	INS
<i>ombbligo</i>	navel
<i>sandías</i>	watermelons
<i>yerga</i>	slang
<i>el hijo de Santa Ana</i>	the son of Santa Ana
<i>Ya no voy a hablar español</i>	I will no longer speak Spanish
<i>Ya yo puedo leer</i>	Now I can read

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bluff overlooking the Lower Miami Wash.

<sup>2</sup> Guest speaker on occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA.

<sup>3</sup> "Our theories about the origins, structure and function of language attitudes [have been] rather simplistic and, in some instances non-existent." (Ammon, Dittmar & Mattheier, 1987, p 1076).

<sup>4</sup> This refers to the 1979 case regarding language barriers encountered by plaintiff African-American children in the Ann Arbor School District. *Opinion and Order* (Civil Action No. 7-71861, U.S. District Court, East District, Detroit, Michigan).

<sup>5</sup> See Cameron et. al. (1992).

<sup>6</sup> Major roadway which runs east of Los Angeles along Highland Park District, South Pasadena, San Marino, and Monrovia.

<sup>7</sup> This term refers to Chicano youths in Los Angeles and in other major cities of the U.S. in the '30s and '40s who developed their own distinctive clothing and speech style.

<sup>8</sup> Young male and female Chicanos, often gang members.

<sup>9</sup> Prof. Claudia Parodi-Lewin, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, UCLA.

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# **African American English: An Interview with Marcyliena Morgan**

Betsy Rymes  
*University of California, Los Angeles*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Marcyliena Morgan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at UCLA. As a linguistic anthropologist, she has dealt extensively with issues surrounding African American English and her articles *Theories and Politics in African American English* (1994b) and *The African American Speech Community: Reality and Sociolinguistics* (1994a) emphasize the necessity for sociolinguists to consider social contexts and agentive subjects in the creation of sociolinguistic categories. In order to more fully understand the historical and political contexts of African American English, Morgan has conducted fieldwork in sites including Mississippi, Chicago, and London, yielding work about language use and attitudes across the African Diaspora (1993b). Expanding on this perspective, her article *Just to Have Something: Camouflaged Narratives of African American Life* (1994) compares the distinct narrative tendencies in lynching stories told in Chicago with those told in Mississippi. Morgan's work also confronts issues of gender in language, analyzing how African American women are active linguistic agents, skillfully controlling their own interactional environment (1991, 1993c, forthcoming).

In this interview, Morgan elaborates on the necessity to analyze both microlinguistic issues of grammar and phonology as well as larger issues of discourse pragmatics and, ultimately, language ideology. Our talk ranged from the discussion of the poetry of African American poet Lawrence Dunbar, to the debate over the convergence of African American English and 'Standard' American English, to counterlanguage and indirectness, here and abroad. Uniting all these issues is Morgan's insistently reflexive stance and multi-leveled approach to linguistic anthropology. Morgan emphasizes the need for linguists to reflect on the meaning of the analytical decisions they make, and that such reflection necessitates a historical, political, and sociocultural perspective.

## THE INTERVIEW

Rymes: *In your article, Theories and Politics in African American English, you discuss the case of the African American poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar who wrote in the 1900's and was considered to be "one of the first recognized authors of 'pure' African ancestry" (p. 126). While written by a well-educated man, Dunbar's poetry is clearly written in an African American variety of English and for this reason his work has been both praised and criticized by African Americans. What does this case tell us about the complications involved in discussing 'language choice' especially when talking about the 'choice' Dunbar made to use African American English rather than 'standard' American English?*

Morgan: The Dunbar case makes it necessary to look at the relationship between so called language choice and things that people don't necessarily have control over: For example, you speak the language of the place that you're born into. When talking about the Dunbar case and his 'choice' to use African American English for his poetry, we're also talking about a tremendous amount of dominance going on and this has an incredible impact on what happens to people's language and how a variety is interpreted. You have the marginalized and the marginalizer—you have people with power and without power, but there's also this notion that people with power are not exercising it which is part of the American myth or ideal or the neurotic American side. Anyway, it's like 'we didn't do that' or 'it wasn't quite like that.' So the question becomes how much of language 'choice' comes down to people not speaking American English for various reasons. How much of it is because of the limits we as a society put on peoples' ability or rights to participate in that society. At different historical periods the way we frame these questions changes. If you take the case of Dunbar, even though he was an educated man, it's unacceptable for him to write in an educated variety and be of African descent.

Rymes: *How does the Dunbar case relate to the way African American English is used or not used today?*

Morgan: Today we say, 'why is it that so many black kids aren't speaking standard English? If they're not speaking standard English it means they're not going to be able to get a job, they're not going to have success in society.' When we get black kids speaking standard English we say, 'those black kids are just like white kids.' We say things like 'see, you can be black and have black skin and still have white ideals.' And so we clearly associate language not with a particular culture, but with the dominant culture. So that whatever variety you're speaking in this society is looked at

in relation to the dominant culture. It doesn't matter what the variety is. Especially when you're African American.

Rymes: *In the literature some people have called Dunbar's work "subversive," others called it "self hate," precisely because he was using African American English. What do you think of these characterizations and why do you think these characterizations evolve?*

Morgan: Now I don't think this "subversive" vs. "self-hate" dichotomy is actually what goes on. I think that's sort of the way that we as scholars interpret what's going on. I *do* think that part of the problem that we have is that everything is either defined as resistance (or subversion) or is defined as some sort of acceptance of being marginalized. There's no sense of people living daily lives without this notion of doing one or the other.

Rymes: *Does your work on counterlanguage<sup>1</sup> begin to look at language more in the context of people's daily lives? More on its own terms?*

Morgan: I started looking at counterlanguage when I was reading African narratives and public announcements and other African genres and noticed that all these genres are really so similar in the ways the structure or the frame turns out to be. I also noticed interesting ways in which they were different. Well, in linguistics you're always dealing with this notion of innovation, adaptation, and whether something is a continuation of something. And so I began to look at all the work on indirection and began to think that these things need to be linked. So I started reading through some of the literature on Africa where there isn't this prevailing perspective of a non-African dominant culture, where people can talk about African culture or a particular society and not have this pressure to think about "what about the larger society?" And I found that even within that sort of environment where multiculturalism is not even seen from the outsider's perspective, counterlanguage occurs. In Africa, certainly insiders will say, 'but actually this person's from that other village, but you don't notice that so we're not going to tell you.' And this is counterlanguage.

Rymes: *So you're saying that counterlanguage that goes on in the U.S., for example, is similar to indirection<sup>2</sup> in Africa?*

Morgan: It is clear that there was something going on that was connected. But then at the same time you're dealing with fighting this essentialist kind of longing for home. And so the question becomes well is this really "African" or is this a desire for something that makes the African American language experience somehow authentic—as a separate language experience. But when you look at the Caribbean and look throughout the

African diaspora and you see similar things happening then I think you have to say that it's clearly something that's related. It's not necessarily that we're influenced by what happens in Jamaica or Jamaica is influenced by what happens here, but certainly we did start with similar discourse systems and interactional systems. It's amazing to see what happened and to stop looking at it as if Africans arrived as slaves with no cultural memory whatsoever—which is an anti-scholarly, anti-intellectual, anti-human position. I mean, the condition of slavery was an inhuman situation, but people ended up here as human beings who had some sort of cultural memory. So of course that's there. And the question is not what did people do. But the question is well, I wonder what happened to that. Because, while that's hard to talk about, hard to capture, because it is hard to talk about and capture, it's also something that is resilient in many ways, in terms of other kinds of intrusions. And I think that is really one of the most interesting things: that you don't end up losing that. Things end up happening that you can see and so there are all these traces throughout the African diaspora and you can see the difference between what it means to have been in the U.S. versus what it means to have been in Jamaica and what it means to then go from Jamaica to London or something like that. So you get to see that things have their own place and their own historical trajectory. And that there are these overlapping similarities.

Rymes: *So what kinds of things do you look at linguistically when you track the trajectory this way?*

Morgan: Well if I'm looking at something like "counterlanguage" I'm basically not looking at grammar or phonology.

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**"I'm looking at the levels of language where people can negotiate intentionality and agency."**

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I'm looking at the levels of language where people can negotiate and mediate intentionality and agency, because that is something that I think people can operate with on a very conscious level. Not always as conscious sometimes as others, but that people can intend to do things, and people can interpret it that way. I do work at other levels of language, but not in the context of counterlanguage. I mean one of the things that I find intriguing is that interaction and grammar go together, and so part of what happens interactionally, happens with grammar, and happens with, especially in the African diaspora, phonology. And that becomes very important. So I ask myself, how do I define this particular setting, this particular speech



community, in those terms. And that is where I look at grammar and phonology. But not in terms of counterlanguage. I think that you can only get weak arguments if you look at that, especially because you can't really do historical reconstruction on much of phonology. In terms of grammatical analysis for the African American varieties, we run into many problems with genetic relationships versus typological relationships and those are very hard to deal with. And we're talking about a field where there is tremendous conflict over whether or not there is really something called 'decreolization'.<sup>3</sup> So it isn't clear how one looks at these in terms of historical reconstructions. But I do think when we're talking about African American English, you have to look at what we know about the language source, the language origins of people. The more we look at those things, the more we understand how to really look at what we get in terms of what's going on now. Arriving at a very full notion of language origin involves more than just knowing one language, or generally the language family. The more information you have the more you can actually do.

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**"Interaction and grammar go together, and so part of what happens interactionally, happens with grammar, happens with, especially in the African diaspora, phonology."**

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*Rymes: You've written about the debate over the divergence of African American English and so-called Standard American English. In your review of The Death of Black English (Butters, 1989) you outline the arguments of those who believe the two are diverging and those who think the two are converging as well as those who believe, like John Butters, that Black English Vernacular is actually dying out. Where do you fall in this debate?*

*Morgan: I have trouble with the debate at many levels. One basic level is that people are using competing methodologies. The notion of 'what is a token' or what a token actually represents is a problematic one because in sociolinguistic study, when you're counting tokens, tokens themselves become iconic. They become tropes. So that an absence or presence makes you authentically African American in some way. But problems arise when you consider what the sample was and how your tokens are selected. For example let's say you interview fifteen people but the distribution is such that eighty percent of your tokens come from two or three of these people. You must be very careful about the level to which you generalize your findings. So when you're comparing these studies back and forth and you're talking about "I found this" you're dealing with subsets in these arguments, you're not dealing with the entire sample size. And it's clear as you read it*

closely that you're not. So you're not actually talking about the same thing. The question becomes much more of an ideological question: Why did you decide at this particular move to choose two people and then develop this incredible argument based on two or three people or point two percent of your sample or something like that. So there's so much of that going on.

I also think at the level of linguistics, that what linguists consider to be representative of a particular variety very often does not match what members of that society believe to be a language style that represents membership. And I think that, while you don't want to ignore what linguists think, what actual *users* of these languages, people who actually make these languages come alive, what these people do and say and think should be included in what we write. That's a major problem with the arguments about divergence and innovations; and linguists generally don't deal with these issues directly. They're embarrassed by them or uncomfortable with them.

*Rymes: How does discussion of social class intersect with the debate about varieties of English and African American English?*

Morgan: Well I think that the difficulty with social class in African American culture has not been fully addressed. Minimally anthropologists do it. But when you have cultures where the idea that it doesn't matter what your class is within the culture and you still are a member and are expected to participate in particular ways, then you have to re-assess what is meant by social class and really begin to look at status and the importance of status. One also has to look

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**"What linguists consider to be representative of a particular variety very often does not match what members of that society believe to be a language style that represents membership."**

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at what social class is in a group that's marginalized. Because the indicators of social class then end up varying, one can appear to be a particular social class and not actually be. So that if I don't have the middle-class occupation but I have everything else, then, am I not middle class? If I *have* the occupation but I'm the only middle class member of a family which is not middle class and I associate and live with members of that family, am I then middle class? Even though one assumes that every bit of my income is going into feeding and taking care of four—maybe ten—people? So do we still call that middle class? I think that this sense that class is determined by a 1920s notion of immigrants and working class

versus various kinds of class associated with occupations and education really only fits one particular culture—I don't think it even fits all white ethnic cultures. But it takes a grandiose sort of imagination to think that such a concept of social class might fit well enough to be applied throughout any of the immigrant populations or peoples of America.

Rymes: *So it sounds like pinning down 'social class' or some sort of 'middle class' might contribute to the difficulty in finding the appropriate methodology for studying African American English.*

Morgan: Or the language of ANY people of color. Because the varieties that people use have so much to do with being in multiple environments. And those multiple environments aren't just ruled by class, but often by cultural values that go against dominant society. So if a particular form of talk is valued in a context even if it is stigmatized by many people who overhear it, it really doesn't mean it's not going to happen. Especially for youth. In the case of youth it means that it probably *will* happen.

I do think that linguists have an obligation to really look at class, to make advances on this notion of class. Sociologists, because of what they're doing, aren't necessarily constantly seeing evidence contrary to these categories, whereas linguists constantly see evidence that suggests we can't have these categories. They're not static.

Rymes: *What do you think about the way Labov (1966) segmented the classes by department store?<sup>4</sup> How valid is it that he found that the language used by African Americans in the 'middle class' department store showed evidence of "linguistic insecurity,"<sup>5</sup> or a switching between varieties of English, searching for the most appropriate. What do you think of this research?*

Morgan: In many respects I like it because I like poking at the middle class and saying "here you are, and in fact you're linguistically insecure." On the other hand, I think that the notion of linguistic insecurity is contextually driven. I think all of us, unless you're among the elite or you're an incredibly arrogant academic, can be insecure in *some contexts* and we aren't always sure how one should address people in this particular situation or how the style of talk or interaction is interpreted. So I think that in many respects "linguistic insecurity" is normal unless you're incredibly elite. I think Labov's right in that if you're from a strong working class community and you don't leave that context, then you have that strong position. But it's really only people who have incredible power who cannot pay attention to how they talk to people, or the style and the variety that they're using. They're the only ones, ultimately. It isn't surprising to find what Labov found in New York City.

On the other hand, I think what was important about what he did was that there were, at the time, dialectologists promoting an idea that such variation didn't exist; that you didn't get this variety of pronunciation from individuals—especially individuals who shared a particular social class. So it was really a pretty brilliant move on his part. But I think we tend to get caught up in this notion of "oh there's no class and what does this mean" and I think that's absurd really.

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**"I think that in many respects 'linguistic insecurity'  
is normal unless you're incredibly elite."**

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Rymes: *But for Labov it was pretty easy to operationally define "middle class" by basing it on a department store. If somebody wanted to do a study now and decide what was middle class, how could they? Or should they?*

Morgan: You could definitely do it. Should they? I think 'why not?' But in a place like Los Angeles, it's a little more complicated. I think that if you were doing California then you're dealing with language differences as well as different types of language. But you could do it. Target, for example, (or *Targét*, as I like to call it—and *that's* a middle class move!) is quite different from Barney's [Barney's of New York, a department store in Beverly Hills]. It's very easy to do the upper class—We could just go to Barney's and find exactly what Labov found. What is *middle* becomes a little more complicated. Is it Broadway? Or is it Robinsons/May now that they've combined?

Rymes: *Right, and where are you in Los Angeles.*

Morgan: Yes, where are you in Los Angeles. Which Robinsons. I think it takes a certain kind of urban area (like New York City) to pull off a study like Labov's. And I *do* think that it is probably the case that one may be able to do it, but in a place like this [Los Angeles], how one presents oneself in terms of class has so much to do with the fact that this is Hollywood, and people are *often* trying to be something they're not. So, it's much more complicated here.

Rymes: *I know in your work, you've looked at narratives and indirectness in the discourse of African Americans rather than focusing on strictly linguistic analysis. Is this your way of solving some of the methodological problems you see in other work on African American English?*

Morgan: Well, what I try to do in my work is not look at one thing in particular. I think that the problem that people have is something that is a natural thing to do in linguistics: the compartmentalization of levels. And so you do morphology, phonology, syntax, and pragmatics, and you assume you can look at one level and that the other level is not coming in or in any way affecting anything that you're saying. I remember being taught that this level of abstraction is necessary in order to do an analysis. The problem for me, in terms of studying African American culture, is that people have a self awareness of the levels at different points in time. So if we just look at 'grammar' for example, or phonology, we may miss the insight that what someone is doing with that phonology is setting up a particular frame so they can do something else that has to do with pragmatics. By isolating phonology we really have only captured something at the most superficial level. That to me is a problem. I think you can use that methodology if you know the way in which language works in a particular society. So, if you know that indirection is noticeable and identifiable in a particular language in most cases, then you can go ahead, perhaps, and study that. And I think at some level of language analysis if you want to know what some of the grammatical possibilities are, fine. But to go beyond that and try to make generalizations about what people *mean*, or the significance of it within society, I think you need to know a lot more. That's really where I differ with those involved in the divergence/convergence debate.

Rymes: *Do you think that the more linguistically oriented researchers would have a problem with the fact that you don't see formal linguistics as necessarily the most revealing way to study African American English?*

Morgan: Well there is a complication. By not looking solely at formal linguistic analysis, in a way, my work is marginalized. I think anyone that doesn't do it gets marginalized as 'not really a linguist' because the level of analysis that has nothing to do with context, nothing to do with people, nothing to do with culture, is, at this point in time at least, still considered to be the quintessential definition of 'linguistic' analysis. And that's also a big problem that I think exists. And I think it's a conflict that anybody working on any variety of a 'standard' language has to deal with.

Rymes: *You've mentioned in your article, "The African American Speech Community: Reality and Sociolinguistics," that we need to find what Sankoff calls "Sociolinguistically Meaningful Categories." What do you mean by this?*

Morgan: Finding the "sociolinguistically meaningful" really depends on what we're working on. Because I really think that what we're doing is using our discipline to really show, demonstrate, reveal to the world what's going on within a particular group, society, culture. So the sociolinguistically

relevant categories have got to have something to do with that. For example, in my research on African women talking, I've started talking about this notion of 'reading.'<sup>6</sup> Now within African American culture people talk about this all the time: "I don't wanna get *read*" or "She's *reading* me." But this really becomes a sociolinguistic category in that when reading occurs, certain linguistic, grammatical systems then have to be applied. Because it's very difficult to get read, let's say, if you use only American English grammar. It's just not that effective. You're not effectively read—which means probably you're not read.

Another example is the work on "instigating" by Marjorie Goodwin: When I read *He Said She Said* I was of course very impressed and what I eventually did in my work was look at girls' disputes using her framework as a jumping off point. But it made me also remember something that I knew about those disputes and to look at this notion of instigating in terms of what happens in instigating and what does it *mean*. What is the person who's on the quest to find out 'who said what' really doing? It is very much the case that in the process of finding out who instigated, you have to accuse. So there is always accusative language going on. And you're accusing your *friends* of having heard something and not telling you, basically. So all the friends have to defend themselves and convey "I am truly a friend, even though I didn't tell you." And so the person is constantly saying: "You knew, you didn't tell me?" "Uh huh, uh huh," and then you go on to the next person. So of course there are these particular forms, so I think that understanding these contexts becomes necessary to understand relevant sociolinguistic categories. We should begin to expect a certain kind of talk in a particular context and analyze it to see what kinds of things happen at all linguistic levels in these particular contexts. But we should not act as though people aren't establishing these things themselves.

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**"I really think that what we're doing is using our discipline to really show, demonstrate, reveal to the world what's going on within a particular group, society, culture."**

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Rymes: *You've also mentioned in some of your articles how African American Discourse is a form of "symbolic" or "semiotic capital." What do you mean by this?*

Morgan: Well, on the one hand, not all, but most African Americans realize that African American English is different from American English and that in certain contexts it can be used in a way that allows speakers better footing than for example, the people they interact with might realize they can get.

But also, within African American culture, the use of African American English also can mean that you're going to get a certain kind of respect. And I'm not talking about grammar here. I'm talking about style or types of interaction or verbal genres. Because all of that is the case, it does become symbolic capital, and this is true across class. When people say "Black people shouldn't speak Black English" or something like that, it is certainly an apolitical statement, but it's also a statement that is incredibly naive in that I don't understand how people wouldn't speak the language that they're socialized to speak—especially when not participating in various language practices means you can't participate in your home community. While there are people who never want to go back to their home community, I don't think that tends to be typical of the African American experience. So in that respect, African American discourse is symbolic capital, and it just has so much *life*. It is incredibly creative.

Just as an example, I had a African American student in here the other day who is a graduate student at this university and I was talking to her about the word 'conversate' and she said "you know I really did think that was a word even though I'm sure that I knew that it wasn't supposed to be a word. And I know 'beautifullest' isn't right, but I use it all the time, and I like to say 'complicatedly' and I use it all the time and it really drives people crazy but I like it." So there are linguistic rules but there are also things that you can do to those rules as 'play' that aren't stigmatized within the culture.

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**"We should begin to expect a certain kind of talk in a particular context....But we should not act as though people aren't establishing these things themselves."**

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Rymes: *How can these kinds of words can be used as symbolic capital outside of African American culture?*

Morgan: It's an interesting thing. Now if this same student says "complicatedly" in a setting that may have non-African Americans, the African Americans would just laugh because it wouldn't occur to us that she didn't know that was wrong. We would understand her as using it intentionally. But the non-African Americans in that context would think, "Oh my god! She doesn't know! Should we tell her? I don't know what to do." And she would know that both of those things are going on. And that is the way symbolic capital works. The interesting question when we look at it from a strictly political perspective is, 'what does it mean to do that?' What she's saying is, 'we do this, but what you don't get is that there is

intentionality, there's agency. So that our doing this, from your perspective, is reinforcing your bigotry in a way. From our perspective, it's making your bigotry clear, because you're not responding as though you think it's funny that I'm speaking this way. You're responding as though I don't know what I'm doing. On the other hand, it *is* reinforcing their stereotype. And so it's an interesting move in that it's sort of like 'here's the stereotype in your face.' And so among the group it's like 'yep, they're bigots.' And from the other group it's 'poor them, even when they get educated they can't talk.' So it's this interesting tension that's constantly played out.

Rymes: *At the end of your article, Theories and Politics in African American English (1994b), you say that "the study of African American language and culture is also the study of U.S. culture and scholarship." What do you mean by that?*

Morgan: Well, I do think, and I'm certainly not the first person to say that, that we are looking at this country, ourselves, whenever we are looking at African American English because we really do have to take a position. We take an ideological position, we take a political position. We are positioning ourselves within historical perspectives—at every conceivable level we're taking a position. I think that it's important to recognize that in taking a position we're saying something about ourselves as scholars and as a country. And what we're saying may or may not be what people want to hear.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Morgan defines "counterlanguage" as the level of African American language development which is "the result of a conscious attempt on the part of U.S. slaves and their descendants to represent an alternative reality through a communication system based on ambiguity, irony, and satire" (Morgan, 1993, p. 423). While counterlanguage originated as a form of resistance to slavery, however, Morgan emphasizes that counterlanguage also has a foundation in African forms of speech.

<sup>2</sup> African American "indirectness" is typically associated with the practice of "signifying" but Morgan suggests it is also a more general characteristic of African American interaction. Signifying (a form of indirectness) takes two forms: "i) pointed indirectness—when a speaker ostensibly says something to someone (mock receiver) that is intended for—and to be heard by—someone else and is so recognized; ii) baited indirectness—when a speaker attributes a feature to someone which may or may not be true or which the speaker knows the interlocutor does not consider to be a true feature" (Morgan, forthcoming).

<sup>3</sup> Traditionally, the idea of "decreolization" was based on the notion of a "creole" as a "deficit" language to be gradually replaced by the standard language. Recently, however, creoles have been shown to be elaborate systems (with significant



linguistic and social foundations) which maintain themselves as languages in their own right and do not necessarily "decreolize" (c.f. Morgan, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Labov (1966) devised a study in New York department stores where he elicited the phrase "fourth floor" from sales people. In the 'lower class' store, subjects maintained their R-less pronunciation even when asked to repeat the phrase a second time. In the 'upper class' department store, sales people maintained their standard pronunciation. In the 'middle class' department store, however, salespeople had R-less pronunciation on their first utterance, but when asked to repeat, they switched to standard pronunciation. This was taken to be a sign of the "linguistic insecurity" (see footnote 4) of the middle class.

<sup>5</sup> "Linguistic insecurity" is "a sociolinguistic attribute measured by the number of cases (out of a prepared list) in which a speaker reports that his own pronunciation differs from what he regards as the correct pronunciation." (Ferguson & Heath, 1981, p. 530).

<sup>6</sup> Building on Goffman (1967), Morgan defines "reading" as a practice which "occurs whenever a speaker denigrates another to his or her face in an unambiguous manner." The variety of language used comes into play in "reading dialect," which occurs "when members of the African American community contrast or otherwise highlight obvious features of African American English (AAE) and American English (AE) in an unambiguous manner to make a point" (Morgan, forthcoming).

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***The Study of Second Language Acquisition*** by Rod Ellis.  
Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994. vii + 824 pp.

Reviewed by Scarlett L. Robbins  
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The field of second language acquisition (SLA) research, now more than 25 years old, is expanding rapidly and widening the scope both of its research interests and perspectives (e.g., cognitive, grammatical, neural, pragmatic, and socio-interactive aspects of language learning and use) and of its applicability to other fields (e.g., anthropology, cognitive psychology, second/foreign language teaching, sociology, theoretical linguistics). With three journals devoted primarily to SLA research (e.g., *Language Learning*, *Second Language Research*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*) and numerous others regularly publishing articles on the topic (e.g., *Applied Language Learning*, *Applied Linguistics*, *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, *TESOL Quarterly*), the task of presenting a comprehensive review of the literature on SLA has become a daunting one indeed. Ellis' *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* is an attempt to accomplish just that task.

Ellis claims that the acceptance of SLA as a discipline in its own right depends upon its status as a defined field of inquiry and the existence of a body of research and knowledge related to it (p. 3). With this volume, he sets out to satisfy these defining criteria and thereby to establish SLA as a discipline in its own right. He first delimits the range and scope of the field of SLA research and then comprehensively reviews the existing SLA literature in a logically organized fashion so as to demonstrate the conceptual coherence of this broad, multi-perspective, and somewhat diverse field.

*The Study of Second Language Acquisition* is aimed primarily at future second/foreign language teachers who, Ellis argues, would benefit substantially from knowledge of SLA research. This book can provide teachers with invaluable insights and help them to make their assumptions about SLA explicit and, as a consequence, to more effectively evaluate their pedagogic practices (p. 4). The text is also aimed at introductory level SLA students and SLA researchers in need of a reference text.

The text consists of 15 chapters organized into seven parts and is supplemented by an extensive glossary, a bibliography, and author and subject indices. Ellis sets out in Part One to define the field of SLA research by considering the basic questions which it seeks to answer and to

outline a conceptual framework for the remainder of the text. This framework distinguishes between "descriptions" and "explanations" of SLA phenomena and between the various subfields which have emerged over the past 25 years; these subfields include the effects of learner external factors (e.g., social, interactive, input based) and learner internal factors (e.g., L1 transfer, cognitive processes, linguistic universals) on SLA, the role of individual differences in SLA, and the influence of classroom instruction and interaction on SLA. In Parts Three through Six Ellis attempts to comprehensively and "descriptively" (i.e., in a balanced and objective manner) review the SLA research conducted thus far in the subfields described above in an effort to answer the basic questions of the field. In Part Seven, he addresses the respective contributions of both empirical and theoretical approaches to SLA research and the applicability of the findings of such research to other fields, particularly to second and/or foreign language teaching.

Considering the organization and contents of the text in more detail, Part One has one chapter which serves as an introduction and which offers a brief summary of the scope of research conducted in the field of SLA and provides the reader with necessary background information. This chapter also outlines the conceptual framework of the text and provides a rationale for its organization. Following this framework throughout the text, Ellis separates research which seeks to describe SLA phenomena (Part Two) from that which seeks to explain it (Parts Three to Six).

Part Two consists of four chapters and considers the nature and defining characteristics of the interlanguage systems of second language learners (SLLs). These four chapters address the description and analysis of learners' errors, the patterns and sequences of acquisition of various structures in SLA, the variability observed in the interlanguage systems of SLLs, and the pragmatic aspects of learner language.

Part Three, with two chapters, offers potential explanations of SLA phenomena based upon factors which are external to language learners. The first of these chapters considers the effects of social factors such as gender, social class, ethnic identity, and social context of learning on SLA. The second addresses the influence of input (e.g., modified input such as motherese or foreigner talk) and interaction (e.g., attempts to obtain comprehensible input and collaborative discourse) on SLA.

The three chapters of Part Four consider the potential of learner internal factors to explain SLA phenomena. One chapter reviews literature on the effects of language transfer from, for example, a first language on observed SLA phenomena. Another chapter considers the potential of numerous cognitive accounts such as Monitor Theory, the Multidimensional Model, and information processing, variability, and skill learning models to explain L2 acquisition and L2 competence. The third chapter addresses the

influence of linguistic universals in the form of innate linguistic rules and principles and observed typological generalizations on SLA phenomena.

Part Five addresses the literature that seeks to explain individual differences in SLA and contains two chapters. The first of these chapters discusses the potential of individual learner differences such as beliefs about language learning, age, aptitude, and motivation to explain observed individual differences in SLA. The second chapter investigates the role of differences in cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies in accounting for individual differences in SLA.

The two chapters in Part Six are devoted to research on the acquisition of a second language (L2) within a classroom context. One chapter is on the influence of interaction in the classroom on SLA and the other considers the potential of formal classroom instruction to alter the rate, sequence, or the level of ultimate attainment in SLA.

Part Seven, containing a single chapter, serves as the conclusion of the text. In this final chapter, Ellis discusses the respective roles of empirical and theoretical research in the field of SLA and offers a review of various epistemological positions regarding the construction and evaluation of a theory of SLA. This chapter also addresses the thorny question of to what extent and how the results of SLA research can ethically be applied to other disciplines, most importantly to second/foreign language pedagogy.

Ellis is, in my opinion, successful in establishing the legitimacy of the field of SLA research as an independent and valuable discipline which, notably, exists in symbiotic relationship with a number of other fields with related research interests (e.g., anthropology, linguistics, psychology, second/foreign language pedagogy, sociology). He is also generally successful in providing a coherently organized and comprehensive review of the last 25 years of research in the field of SLA. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* reviews an enormous quantity of literature from multiple perspectives including not only the traditional psycholinguistic perspective but also from the sociolinguistic and theoretical linguistic perspectives investigating numerous aspects of learner interlanguage systems and the processes underlying L2 acquisition. Even so, Ellis almost entirely neglects a body of research which approaches SLA from a neural perspective and which is included in other much shorter general texts on SLA research (e.g., *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research* by Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991 and *Issues in SLA: Multiple Perspectives* edited by Beebe, 1988).

As previously mentioned, this text is aimed primarily at future second/foreign language teachers and also at introductory level SLA students and SLA researchers. Although I consider the text to be an invaluable reference tool for established SLA researchers and to serve as an appropriate introduction to the field of SLA for students from any discipline, I doubt that it could feasibly be used as a textbook for an introductory level

course due to its length; it seems unlikely that students could cover the nearly 700 pages of actual text within a single term. Although the text is logically organized into discrete chapters and sections which are largely independent of one another, I hesitate to suggest that an instructor assign only certain chapters of the text because of the risk that students would miss out on critical information or an appreciation of the breadth and scope of research in the field of SLA. A second weakness of the book as an introductory text is its lack of study questions and exercises at the end of each chapter which can serve to provoke thought and discussion of the fundamental issues and to afford students an opportunity to begin thinking of how the issues raised and the results presented in the text might be applied to language pedagogy or could be further researched in future studies. Such questions and exercises seem especially important for future language teachers who might be reading the text in an earnest attempt to gain an awareness of the field of SLA research and attempt to apply the theoretical concepts and empirical results of this research to the actual practice of language teaching. Ellis does, however, provide readers with an extensive glossary of key terms which appear throughout the text in italic type. He also offers quite helpful suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter accompanied by descriptions of the relevance and strengths of each of the references. The glossary, in particular, makes this text very approachable for students from any discipline who are just beginning their study of SLA.

*The Study of Second Language Acquisition* is ideally suited as a reference tool not only for established SLA researchers who, although experts in their own subfields, may benefit from an overview of the fundamental issues and research findings in other subfields, but also for students of SLA and future second/foreign language teachers who are seeking either an introduction to the field as a whole or an overview of research within a particular subfield. Despite minor shortcomings, the text provides an extensive, well organized, and largely unbiased review of the literature in SLA, including a comprehensive and balanced selection of research from a broad range of perspectives addressing diverse issues. Furthermore, the text is supplemented by a 38-page glossary containing entries identifying the researcher with whom the term originated or is closely associated, providing citations of the research in which the term first appeared or is exemplified, and offering a descriptive yet concise definition of the term. Also, Ellis provides both author and subject indices which allow the reader to conveniently locate discussions of research conducted by a particular author or related to a given topic.

Due to the ever widening scope of the field and the existence of multiple research perspectives, the task of providing a comprehensive, balanced, and coherently organized review of the literature on SLA is becoming increasingly more difficult. At the same time such a text is

becoming a virtual necessity for SLA students and researchers alike who seek to maintain a satisfactory level of familiarity with research conducted within the various subfields of SLA. In my opinion, Ellis' *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* is a solid, balanced, and reasonably comprehensive SLA reference text which provides SLA students and researchers alike with an invaluable resource tool.

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***How Languages are Learned*** by Patsy Lightbown and Nina Spada. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. 135 pp.

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"We believe that information about findings and theoretical views in second language acquisition research can make you a better judge of claims made by textbook writers and proponents of various language teaching methods" (p. xiii), state Patsy Lightbown and Nina Spada in their text *How Languages are Learned*. Their goal is ambitious: to summarize and synthesize current research in second language acquisition and to hold it up against the often misleading light of popular notions relating to the issue. This volume aims to enable ESL teachers to evaluate second language acquisition research and the popular ideas that surround it and encourage them to take a more critical view of ESL textbooks and their own teaching. The techniques that Lightbown and Spada employ to fulfill their goal are clear writing, organized, balanced, and non-partisan presentations of conflicting research, sound definitions of terms (all key technical terms within the text are italicized and are included in a well-written glossary), and interactive charts to develop and maintain the reader's role as a critic.

Chapter 1 introduces the behaviorist, innatist, and interactionist theories of child first language acquisition by means of a case study and Lightbown's own unpublished data. According to Lightbown and Spada, these positions define language learning, respectively, as a process of imitation and habit, the gradual development of innate capacities, or the result of interactions between the child's capacities and the linguistic environment in which the child is immersed.

Rather than perfunctorily dismantling and dismissing each theory on the basis of its pitfalls, the authors choose to apply each theory to a set of data in order to illustrate for the reader how a particular theory might work. In doing so, the authors present both the useful aspects and the shortcomings of different theories. This calls the reader's attention to what each approach can teach us about language development and learning. For example, Lightbown and Spada exemplify the behaviorist position with a transcript of a child's and an adult's speech. In this particular case, 30-40 per cent of the child's speech does imitate that of the adult. However, the authors note that children imitate to different extents and that what they imitate is not random, but it is "based on something the child already knows, not simply on what is 'available' in the environment" (p. 3). In Chapter 2, four selected



theories of second language acquisition are presented: behaviorism, cognitive theory, Krashen's creative construction theory, and Long's interactionist view. Theories about the role of correction, input, and imitation in second language acquisition are also described.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the influence of the learner's attitude and motivation, intelligence, and learning style on the acquisition process, and the authors describe the difficulty in measuring such factors. Studies conducted by Johnson and Newport (1989) and Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978) are used in the discussion on the effect of the age variable on language learning.

The information in Chapter 4 focuses more narrowly on the learner's language, centering upon error analysis and the stages in which particular grammatical structures are learned in both first and second languages. Both L1 and L2 data are used to present different stages in the acquisition of linguistic structures such as question formation and negation.

Chapter 5 concerns the language classroom. The authors present five teaching approaches: audiolingual/grammar-based, interactionist (emphasis on negotiated meaning and comprehensible input), 'just listen' (silent method), and 'get it right in the end' (developmental readiness: not all aspects of language can be taught, though some must). The effectiveness of these approaches is discussed in light of current research.

In Chapter 6, Lightbown and Spada offer a tempered discussion in which they compare prevalent notions about language learning with the research results that they have so carefully explained and plotted throughout the book. Though their discussion consciously avoids "theory bashing," the authors do have a point of view (and naturally so) and wish to persuade the reader that the popular slogans of how languages are learned are not subtle enough to answer many questions about the phenomenon. It should be noted that given the quite simplistic nature of some of the slogans presented, Lightbown and Spada most likely assume their readership to extend beyond ESL teachers to include readers who have no prior knowledge in the field of SLA and are simply interested in the process of language acquisition. However Lightbown and Spada's text scarcely suffers from this inclusion; *How Languages are Learned* presents a good introduction to SLA for all those interested.

This book suffers only from two minor errors of omission. In the chapter on SLA theories (Chapter 2), Lightbown and Spada explain that they have chosen theories which assume that first and second language acquisition are similar (p. 30). This chapter should be expanded beyond the exceptional cases of Genie and Victor, neither of whom was exposed to language beyond what has been argued to be the "critical period" for language learning. Including views of brain maturation, which represent a vast area of research in SLA, would provide the reader with a wider and more balanced theoretical base. Worthwhile additions to Chapter 2 would be Lenneberg's

(1967) classic study of the stages of language acquisition as potentially largely due to stages in brain development, and/or Long's (1990) recent, in-depth discussion and survey of research on critical vs. sensitive periods in language acquisition with regard to both first and second language acquisition.

Additionally, in the spirit of further aiding those without a background in second language acquisition research, annotating the topically organized bibliography at the end of each chapter [such as is found in H. Douglas Brown's *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (1994)] would be an asset to this book. It would furnish the non-expert with a better understanding of the nature of the sources suggested for further reading.

What emerge from Lightbown and Spada's accessible text, then, are ideas of consequence, especially for the ESL teacher. The most important of these is to convince readers that common opinions about language learning do not form a productive basis for an ESL classroom. Indeed, student progress can be impaired if a teacher implements the assumption that "When learners... are allowed to interact freely (... in group... activities), they learn each other's mistakes" (p. xv). Students may be equally inhibited by a firm adoption of the notion that "Learners' errors should be corrected as soon as they are made in order to prevent the formation of bad habits" (p. xv). Secondly, it is important for ESL teachers to note that answering the questions of how and when second languages are learned is a subtle and complex endeavor. Consequently, a teacher should be prepared to be flexible in incorporating new ideas into the classroom about how languages are learned.

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***Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*** by Colin Baker. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters, 1993. xvi + 319 pp.

Reviewed by Patricia Baquedano-López  
*University of California, Los Angeles*

Many countries are coming to terms with bilingualism within their borders. With this increasing awareness, language policies are being created and educators are trying to redesign curricula to better serve the needs of language minority students. Colin Baker's book *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* is an introductory textbook which provides prospective teachers with a review of the most salient issues in bilingual education. The book is decidedly written to address issues of more European and British import, but Baker makes an effort to include examples from a wide variety of educational policies, for example, New Zealand's programs on the use of Maori and English and the bilingual models in Canada and the U.S. For this reason, teachers and students interested in obtaining a global perspective on bilingualism will find this book appealing.

*Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* is divided into two main sections: A) The individual and social nature of bilingualism and B) Bilingual education policies and classroom practices. Section A contains ten chapters introducing current theories of bilingualism and second language acquisition (SLA). Chapters 1 and 2 discuss in general terms the different types of bilingualism and their measurement. In this regard, rather than following traditional methods, such as self-ratings and questionnaires, Baker emphasizes the need for a communicative testing approach using criterion-referenced tasks; however, after examining a chart of sample communicative situations, one notes their culture-dependancy. For example, the communicative goal that requires children to "give, receive and follow accurately precise instructions" and the assessment task that requires children to "plan a wall display or arrange an outing together in a group" (p. 29) is at best, appropriate for most Western societies; therefore, prospective teachers must bear this in mind when developing language objectives and tasks.

Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the functions of language in society and the need for policies on language revival and reversal. While Baker presents an account of Fishman's (1980) landmark study on diglossia (the use of two languages in distinct language domains, such as the school and the home) as promoting bilingualism, he omits other views that contend that both larger

societal and individual forces have a more direct influence on the bilingual's decision of when and where to use a given language (Pedraza et al., 1980). In the discussion on the advantages of additive bilingualism, where speakers learn and use two languages, Baker criticizes second language instruction as a form of subtractive bilingualism, the situation where speakers learn a second language at the expense of the first. It is true that second language instruction, for example, in the teaching of English to linguistic minorities in the U.S., has been traditionally perceived as undermining an individual's home language and culture, yet that this type of instruction provides immigrants with an opportunity to survive in a new community is often overlooked. A case in point is that of refugees whose very subsistence is threatened by a lack of access to the language of the majority. Furthermore, as Baker explains in Chapter 5, since the development of bilingualism can be either simultaneous, as in childhood bilingualism, or sequential, meaning that a second language is acquired after the first, second language instruction can indeed be a route to bilingualism.

The next two chapters, Chapters 6 and 7, introduce the reader to the field of SLA and its theories and examine the context of language acquisition, learner strategies, and motivation. A substantial line of research on the input and intake distinction is successfully summarized into a few paragraphs. Baker's brief review of the socio-psychological and learning theories of SLA concludes with Krashen's Monitor Model (1977, 1985) and its application to the classroom. However, since the Monitor Model, there has been an interest in demystifying the cognitive functions involved in SLA by means of information processing models and the study of the neurobiology of language. The results of these research efforts might eventually find their way into more tangible applications for the classroom. Similarly, there is a brief mention of early work on language learning strategies, yet more recent pedagogical applications of these research findings are not mentioned; for example, the work of Chamot & O'Malley (1987) on the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), a method now adopted in many U.S. schools. In terms of the type of motivation needed to learn a second language, Baker notes that either integrative motivation (where a learner identifies with the host community) or instrumental motivation (where the learner simply learns a language for utilitarian reasons) can only affect proficiency and the rate of development, but not the sequence or order of acquisition. This is a statement largely unchallenged in the field, but one which calls for further research.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10 explore the common myths of the demands of bilingualism on intelligence and the problems of cultural bias in intelligence testing. A section is devoted to the bilingual brain, but it is largely limited to lateralization. Notwithstanding, Baker discusses in simple terms current research that tries to determine whether there is a separate or shared linguistic storage system in bilinguals.

Section B comprises eight chapters describing the pedagogy of bilingualism. The first two chapters, Chapters 11 and 12, overview the most common types of bilingual education and their effectiveness. Baker includes a thorough presentation of different approaches to bilingual education emphasizing that each country's history and culture contributes to the type of educational approach used.

The next four chapters examine examples of language education. Chapter 13 is an insightful discussion on the benefits of minority language learning addressing the problems of underachievement and the need for biliteracy. Chapter 14 analyzes the pedagogical implications of second language learning in the structural, functional, and interactional (communicative) approaches. Baker also discusses the advantages of a multidimensional language curriculum which includes cultural awareness as a crucial component. Chapter 15 examines teaching and learning strategies in immersion classrooms and presents a more in-depth analysis of the Canadian immersion program. In Chapter 16 Baker introduces a four part bilingual education model based on an integrative "input-output-context-process" approach. This last chapter includes a framework for minority intervention and empowerment which calls, perhaps idealistically, for a joint educational enterprise carried forth by the school, family, and community. For a review and critique of immersion programs in the U.S. the reader can complement Baker's analysis with an edited collection published by the California State Department of Education (1984).

Chapter 17 is concerned with a more macro level view of bilingualism discussing its politics and the need to understand it as stemming from the beliefs on language use of each country. In fact, Baker notes that when minority languages and ethnic groups are seen as a "problem," there is a stronger pull towards assimilation to the majority language. This is an issue that has gained much attention in the U.S. as well, and the interested reader can find a discussion which seeks to promote understanding of minority language maintenance, with particular emphasis on Latino communities, for example, in Merino, Trueba, & Samaniego (1992). Chapter 18, the final chapter, deals with the need to promote multiculturalism and anti-racism in the classroom stressing the interdependence of variables, in this case, politics, culture, and education.

Teachers in training, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, will find the layout of *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* easy to use and its contents informative. The book is aesthetically pleasing with boxes, tables, figures, and graphs interspersed throughout. In addition to a manageable list of suggested further readings for each chapter, there is also a list of study questions and exercises which can be used to generate further discussion on the topic. Perhaps the most interesting feature concerns the Study Activities at the end of each chapter, some of which require that the students do hands-on activities in bilingual classrooms. The book also

features a list of recommended further reading, author and subject indices, a bibliography, and three appendices with sample surveys to measure attitude towards bilingualism and language use. A weakness, however, is the practice of highlighting terminology which is not always clearly defined. In spite of this and a few distracting typographical errors, Baker's is an attractive textbook written in accessible language, and one which was conceived with the novice in mind.

Overall, *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* offers a valuable introduction to the multiple possibilities in bilingualism and bilingual education. The book's main message is that bilingualism is a resource for the individual, community, and nation. Despite the limitations imposed mainly by the need to select information from the vast research that is available, Baker has accomplished the goal of providing the novice teacher with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the what, why, and how of bilingualism.

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*Culture and Language Learning in Higher Education* edited by Michael Byram. Clevedon, Philadelphia, and Adelaide: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 1994. 111 pp.

Reviewed by Kylie Hsu  
*University of California, Los Angeles*

*Culture and Language Learning in Higher Education* is based on an international colloquium on learning foreign languages and cultures held in Manchester, England, in 1993. It consists of ten articles related to culture and language learning in higher education in England, Germany, France, and Denmark. The articles do not appear to follow any thematic format, though the first few seem to be more theoretically oriented, addressing issues in culture and language learning, while the later ones deal more with case studies.

The book begins with an article by Dieter Kerl entitled, "The Case of *Landeskunde*: A Vicious Circle?" The German word *Landeskunde* literally means 'knowledge of the land.' Cultural Studies in Germany is known as *Landeskunde*, and has mostly been taught as an ancillary subject of language, literature, or other social sciences, but Kerl advocates giving *Landeskunde* a bona fide status in the academy. Making an analogy of studying *Landeskunde* with the study of medicine, he states, "Just as a student of medicine has to study systematically the anatomy of the human body, a student of English has to study the 'anatomy' of Britain and the USA first before she/he can start teaching the language." Kerl devotes most of his article to explaining why it is important to make *Landeskunde* an independent field of study rather than retain it as an auxiliary subject of the social sciences. He also devotes considerable space to criticizing the state of *Landeskunde*, but offers virtually no solution to the situation beyond calling for more research.

Jean-Paul R  vauger echoes Kerl's concern about the fact that cultural studies are seen mostly as an auxiliary in language teaching. In his article, "Civilisation/Cultural Studies in Grenoble," R  vauger suggests that prospective language teachers need to also acquire knowledge of political science, history, sociology, and economics in order to make language learning more attractive and efficient. Like Kerl, he acknowledges the lack of research in cultural studies and would like to see this area become a full-fledged discipline, or at least recognized as a multidisciplinary field.

Unlike Kerl, Herald Husemann's "From NIMBY *Landeskunde* to IMBY Cultural Studies" does propose a way of teaching *Landeskunde*. NIMBY



refers to 'not in my backyard.' This notion views learning and understanding of a foreign culture as unimportant or unnecessary. Husemann proposes the approach of IMBY ('in my backyard') to develop awareness of one's own culture and the foreign/target culture through mixing native and non-native speakers. He suggests pairing students learning a foreign language with native speakers of that language and sending them out to explore culture-specific and physically tangible entities such as railway stations, markets, churches, and monuments. The practical, hands-on ethnographic projects are designed to sharpen students' awareness of the new linguistic/cultural environment. In the process, the students produce multi-media documentation. There is an abundance of literature on the so-called 'authentic language learning' which appears to be the American counterpart of the European IMBY approach.

Celia Roberts also proposes an ethnographic approach to language learning in her article, "Cultural Studies and Student Exchange: Living the Ethnographic Life." For a student studying a foreign language abroad, this experience-based learning is more appropriate than a text-based approach. Roberts suggests that language students, like anthropologists, can develop techniques which draw them into the field and focus on the cultural practices of the target-language group in order to make sense of them. Roberts notes that in addition to participant observation, it is also important to elicit the language and perceptions of informants in order to understand how they make sense of their everyday lives. However, the author does not provide specific guidelines for carrying out this ethnographic approach.

On the other hand, Edward G. Woods does provide guidelines for conducting specific ethnographic projects. Woods' article, "British Studies in English Language Teaching," provides a very clear description of the British *Area Studies* in an English Language program for foreign students at the Institute of English Language Education in the University of Lancaster. Discussions cover both the macro-descriptions of culture and society taught in isolation on the one hand, and micro-descriptions of social behavior that is embedded in the language on the other. The former provides students with an encyclopedic view of the society, while the latter, approached through ethnographic investigations involving participant observation, promotes cross-cultural understanding that can be transferred to the classroom. For example, as part of discourse analysis, students look at local newspapers critically to become aware of the patterns of their own culture and relate their findings to real-life situations. Descriptions of the tasks involved in two ethnographic projects (Mazur, 1992; Pipeva, 1992) are laid out in the appendices.

In contrast with the writers who advocate life experience with a target language, François Poirier advocates *explication de texte*, i.e., textual analysis, in his article, "Documentary Analysis in *Civilisation Studies*: The French Approach." *Explication de texte* was originally associated with

philology and the translation of classical texts prior to the 19th century. Since then, it has been extended to the study of modern languages. Poirier cites Bernas et al. (1992) as saying, "A text is an artifact which produces a certain meaning, which causes the reader to think: the aim is therefore to show how and for what purpose this meaning has been constructed, how and why it provides food for thought" (p. 49). Poirier claims that *explication de texte* can serve as a compromise between the demands of the communicative approach for practical language skills and the broader linguistic and cultural objectives of foreign language learning.

Where Poirier only discusses *explication de texte* in theoretical terms, Peter Breen provides a detailed chart of a ten-week Certificate Course in Representations of Contemporary Britain to help the reader understand the various topics and reading/study materials that can be used in a cultural studies program. In his article, "New Cultural Studies at Warwick University," Breen presents the structure and content of the British and Comparative Cultural Studies program at the University of Warwick. This program draws from a wide range of subject areas and the cultural diversity of contemporary Britain, covering England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The objective is to develop an awareness of the contemporary British cultures, politics, and economics.

In "International Cultural Studies at Roskilde University," Karen Risager also discusses the form and content of a cultural studies program that incorporates perspectives of language, literature, history, psychology, and social sciences. Risager provides a fairly useful semester-by-semester syllabus of the themes and projects of the class of 1991-93 with the overall focus on Cultural Identity in a Multicultural Europe: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives. The central activity of the cultural studies is problem-oriented project work in groups. She also lists in the appendices degree course description at the Roskilde University Center and the table of contents of an International Cultural Studies Project Report on the Sami People in Norway. These are useful references for individuals or institutions involved in cultural studies.

The article, "Cultural Studies in English Studies: a German Perspective," is by Jürgen Kramer, whose objective is to promote the study of English as a means of access to a wide range of cultures and societies all over the world. In his article, Kramer starts with specific problems, then links them to broader issues of culture. This article provides concrete examples of how a unit in cultural studies is conducted. It analyzes a unit on 'Colonialism and Slavery in the British Empire' in the English Studies program at the University of Bielefeld, Germany. The teaching methodology entails songs, illustrations, literature, and social history.

The book concludes with an article that addresses culture shock from a psychological perspective. In "Communicating in Foreign Lands: The Cause, Consequences and Cures of Culture Shock," Adrian Furnham

discusses various strategies that are aimed at reducing culture shock. They include: (1) information in written form, lectures, or films about topics such as the climate, food, religion, and customs; (2) cultural sensitization to heighten the learners' awareness of their own cultural bias in their behavior; (3) isomorphic attribution, i.e., offering the same cause or reason for others' behavior as they would for themselves; (4) learning by doing which involves simulated target culture experiences; and (5) intercultural social skills training (SST) to acquire the special and necessary skills of social interaction, both verbal and non-verbal, in the target culture. The author argues that, based on his own experience, SST is the most effective way of dealing with culture shock. Furnham then provides some theoretical insight into cultural differences in social behavior including verbal and non-verbal communication. He holds that intercultural communication is a skill that can be analyzed, taught, learned, practiced, and improved. Furnham's discussion of rules regarding exchange of information, products, and gifts; social relationships; and the use of time is reminiscent of that presented in Samovar and Porter (1994), and Hall (1977, 1982, 1983, 1990).

In sum, the book covers language and cultural studies in four Western European countries under the rubrics of the German *Landeskunde*, French *Civilisation*, Danish *Cultural Studies*, and British *Area Studies*. Generally speaking, the book begins with articles addressing theoretical issues of cultural studies, then moves on to examples of ethnographic methods, and concludes with discussions of the psychological perspective on culture and language learning. The overall objective of the compilation is to advocate better incorporation of cultural studies into language learning in higher education.

In my opinion, expanding the coverage to include language and cultural studies beyond the Western European world would make this book more practical. In addition, the articles are only drawn from the disciplines of English and foreign languages, cultural studies, and psychology. Contributions from other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and education would provide different views of language and culture learning, and would hence make this book truly multidisciplinary in nature.

Instead of theoretical discussions of problems with no clear solutions, I would have preferred to see more examples of innovative ideas and methodologies of teaching culture through language, and vice versa. The articles that present first-hand experience in culture and language learning through the ethnographic approach seem to be most interesting and useful in this regard. Despite its limitations, *Culture and Language Learning in Higher Education* offers an invaluable perspective on the integration of language and cultural studies.

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***The Rainmaker's Dog*** by Cynthia Dresser. New York: St. Martins, 1994. xvii + 309 pp.

Reviewed by Tanya Stivers  
*University of California, Los Angeles*

Cultural differences are one of many factors which lead to multiple text interpretations. Socio-economic status, gender, age, and personality, for example, can also shape the way people read and interpret a text. In teaching reading to ESL or EFL students, all of these variables shape the individual's understanding of any particular text. This makes the choice of materials a difficult one—one which the instructor must handle with a great deal of sensitivity and self-reflection. The materials used must avoid stereotypes, but they must also make students aware of the potential for differing text interpretations which may result from their culture. *The Rainmaker's Dog* builds on the similarities as well as the differences between cultures to create a highly communicative, multi-skill reading textbook.

*The Rainmaker's Dog* is intended for high-beginning to intermediate ESL or EFL students. The book is divided into six chapters each of which focuses on a particular geographical region: Central Africa, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, Haiti, Aboriginal Australia, and Asia. Within each chapter is a short introduction to the region which includes basic cultural, historical, and geographical information. Also included are several exercises designed to encourage students to relate their own heritage and beliefs to those of other students and to the readings. Each chapter includes exercises (e.g. designing a family tree) and discussion questions about the regions represented in the text.

For each chapter, the main readings are five to eight folktales chosen for their universal appeal. These short fiction pieces are brief (averaging only two pages) but charming and of interest to individuals of many cultural backgrounds. Although they were gathered and written by the author for the purpose of this book, the stories did not feel at all contrived, and I found myself avidly reading them. The folktales are prefaced by pre-reading exercises and/or discussion questions and are followed by post-reading activities. The activities for each tale vary but may include group discussion questions, jigsaw exercises, information gap activities, and note-taking practice. The variety keeps both the student and the teacher interested, and while many instructors might feel comfortable working directly from the text, the stories lend themselves well to creative development. For the

instructor who wishes to expand on a particular theme, the stories offer a playful introduction to more serious issues. For example, one tale tells of a black-handed monkey and a frog. The frog asks the monkey to wash his hands until they become white, and the monkey asks the frog to sit up straight. Since neither animal is capable of doing as his friend wishes, their friendship ends. Thus, this tale could be used individually or supplementally as a segway into a unit on conflict resolution or the demands of relationships.

Each chapter concludes with comprehensive exercises designed to help readers make connections between the folktales of that region and their themes. The section on East and Southern Africa, for example, has an exercise on cause and effect based on the stories of the first three chapters. This activity not only builds on earlier stories with which the students are familiar, but also integrates a new skill which can be further developed by the instructor either with later stories or with separate exercises.

*The Rainmaker's Dog* deals with cultural differences and similarities by focusing students' attention on specific personality traits and beliefs in their native cultures. Because it is designed for general discussions about culture and communication, it would be appropriate in non-American (e.g., British or Australian) as well as American ESL classrooms. Additionally, it would be appropriate in a variety of EFL settings since it allows students to draw upon their own cultural and content schemata to recognize similar universal issues (e.g., grief and friendship). From there students can move to a discussion of different approaches to these issues as seen in different cultures.

It is important that we, as instructors, recognize that for many individuals the similarities found among different cultures may be just as numerous and just as important as the differences. By using materials such as those presented in *The Rainmaker's Dog*, classroom discussions can encompass all sides of these complex issues. I would recommend this text for instructors of ESL or EFL intermediate classes who are searching for brief in-class readings to practice skills such as predicting, vocabulary building, and comprehension, or for the instructor who would like readings which spark student interest and lead into group discussions and activities.

**Tanya Stivers** is a graduate student in the department of TESL and Applied Linguistics at UCLA. Her research interests include the study of talk and interaction in institutional settings particularly between professionals and their clients. She also has experience teaching ESL students.

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# Journal of MULTILINGUAL and MULTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

*Editor* John Edwards

Within the general mandate of the *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development (JMMD)* a lot of attention has always been given to studies of second-language acquisition. It is a strength in keeping with the ethos of *JMMD* that more theoretical discussion has been entwined with contextualised investigation. It is the ongoing aim of *JMMD* to support cross-disciplinary work and to facilitate development in areas which are of academic/scholarly interest while at the same time reflecting and contributing to actual policy and practice. Those who are already familiar with the journal will know of its scope; those who are not will be pleased to find a publication which combines scholarly rigour with breadth of coverage.

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